PUBLISHED WORKS OF LOUIS JAMES BLOCK

1880 — Exile — A Dramatic Episode — G. I. Jones

1891 — Dramatic Sketches and Poems — Lippincott

1893 — El Nuevo Mundo — A Poem — Charles H. Kerr

1893 — The Friendship of the Faiths — Charles H. Kerr

1895 — The New World with Other Verse — G. P. Putnam's Sons

1898 — Capriccios — G. P. Putnam's Sons

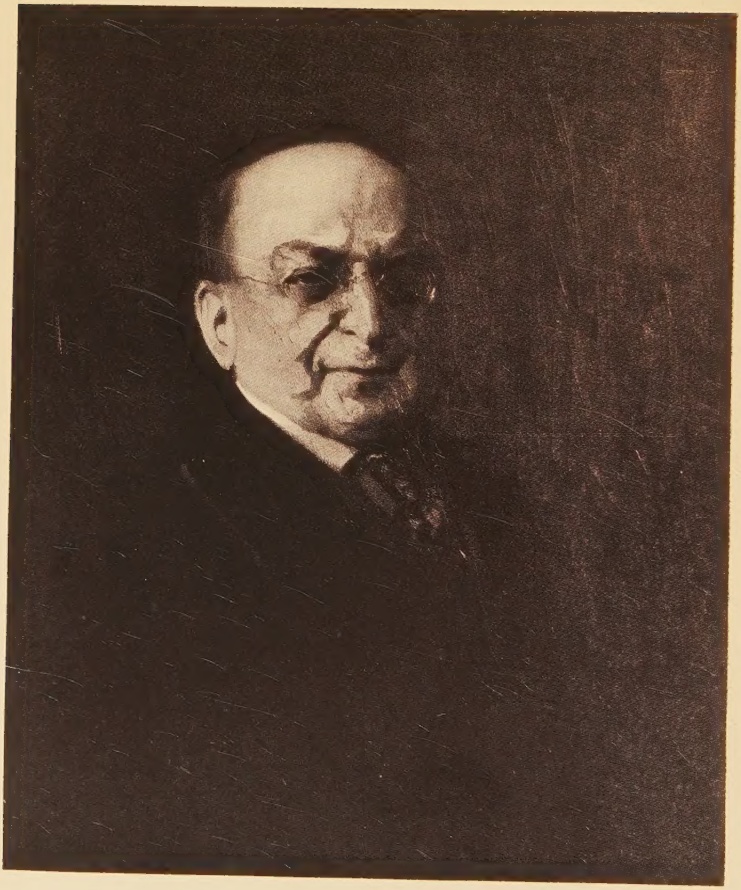
1906 — Many Moods and Many Minds — A Book of Poems — John Lane Co.

1909 — The World's Triumph — A Play — Lippincott

1915 — The Judge — A Play — Gorham Press

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2025

https://archive.org/details/adventuresinartl0000loui



L. J. BLOCK, AFTER A PAINTING BY DAVID L. ADAM

ADVENTURES IN ART LITERATURE AND LIFE

BY LOUIS JAMES BLOCK

A. KROCH · PUBLISHER · CHICAGO · 1929

COPYRIGHT, 1928 BY A. KROCH, PUBLISHER

4900

PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

CONTENTS

Edgar Allan Poe 3
The Transcendentalists of New England . . . 27
David Swing 47
The Gospel of Limitation — A Review of the Poetry of George Eliot 54
The Dramatic Sentiment and Tennyson's Plays . 78
Tennyson's Songs 98
The Poetry of Robert Browning 106
Honoré de Balzac, the Novelist of Society . . . 121
The Liberator Saint of Italy 128
Poetry 136
The Modern Realistic Movement 157
Critics and Criticism 181
The Organization of Literary Study 203
Modern Landscape Painting 224
The Significance of Music 238
The Ever Ancient New 247
Poeta Loquitur 261
Notes on the Novel 268
The Technique of the Drama 280
Four Plays of Henri Bernstein 290
The Learned Professions 298
Educational Ideals 317
The Fascination of Pessimism 336
Is Science Final? 354

ILLUSTRATIONS

PAGE

L. J. Block after a Painting by David L. Adam *Frontispiece*

David Swing, Poet-Preacher of Central Music Hall, 1880–1894 47

Louis J. Block at the Age of 55 203

PREFATORY NOTE

For a brief sketch of the author of these essays the reader is referred to the introduction to volume one of the "Collected Writings of Louis James Block." Here it will suffice to say that some of the essays appeared from time to time in such magazines as *The Sewanee Review, The Dial, Poet Lore* and others, or were read before prominent literary clubs and like organizations. The author himself had contemplated publishing a part of them under the title "Adventures in Art and Literature."

MAX BATT
Literary Executor

Chicago, September, 1928.

POE

EDGAR ALLAN POE

THE literature of this country is not very old, only a century or so, and in the life of a literature that is a mere trifle. The great literature of the mother country was to us both a help and a hindrance; apparently we could have made a start where we had left her, and side by side with her home-staying sons could have carried on the traditions and proceeded to the next expression of national life and thought; in reality, however, we found that we could do nothing of the kind.

The wolf had to be kept from the door, both metaphorically and literally; the severe winters had to be made tolerable and even profitable; the savage had to be met and either overcome or placated. The revolving years brought new hopes and new ideals; as the land began to respond with plenteous harvests and the villages grew to brave and hospitable cities, the denizens of the rising republic found that an inner alienation from the maternal consciousness had appeared like a strange and portentous sun upon their intellectual horizon.

Moreover, the days which had been more or less silent and inarticulate were not found effectless; the tongue had grown inelastic and the speech has become less spontaneous and vigorous. Somehow, also, the things which the motherland was doing, though not devoid of fascination and certainly deserving of admiration, were after all not exactly the kind of effort which appealed strongly to the young and awakened generation. In the mind of the daughter there had occurred

a remarkable concentration of interests, which made much that the motherland undertook somewhat foreign and even grotesque. The narrowness which was consequent upon a life devoted to quite material concerns and far removed from the influence of the academic spirit gained perhaps in depth and strength what it lost by the absence of divergent and alluring claims in various radiating directions. There may be found a certain goodness in provinciality of tastes and labors.

After all, it does not seem to take so very long to make a new type of manhood, and to introduce into the world-series a new scheme of nationality which contains within itself those elements of original effort which cannot find fair and free play in the conditions at a given time in the ascendency. The history of the United States is the history of a constant succession of revolutions, and with us the price of liberty has been the unceasing and sleepless vigilance, without which no great results can ever be achieved.

The new man appeared and made himself felt by the assertiveness which was by no means his least salient characteristic. He found new worlds to conquer, and he had the courage and the self-confidence which mean victory. He had the high sense of responsibility which came to him from his Puritan antecedents, and he had the widening outlook which demanded free play for every form of human belief and opinion. He asked for himself unlimited opportunity of growth and development, and he was ready to concede the same privilege to others. He came in contact with all sorts and manners of men, and the distinctions which have been so persistent and so terrible in the past had small validity for him. Opportunity, largeness of effort, recognition, and an

open road, security and equality of achievement, were to be the inalienable rights of all men.

But this new man had to arise into a distinct consciousness of himself, into a real understanding of the part he was to play in the life-drama proceeding around him, and at least into an apprehension of the significance of that life-drama in its varied aspects. He was to become aware of issues and consequences larger than his own limited experience, and feel that he was a participant in activities that meant success or failure to a whole nation. He was to be the mouthpiece of ideas that were urgent forces in the great world about him, and he held somehow in his grasp a consummation that was of grave importance to mankind. He had a work and a message that he perceived to be either latent or evident in the minds and hearts of the men and women of his nation and period, and he therefore had something decisive to say, to which all others would gladly listen. And so our literature began.

The literature of this country may, perhaps, be said to have had three stages, not counting in the literary activity, such as it is, which is now asking the attention of readers. The material of the earliest stage was serious and stately to the last degree; there was nothing light or frivolous about it; the men who had time to write felt strongly the burden of this visible world, and expressed it with full apprehension of its magnitude and enormity. Theology presented in their writings some of its gloomier aspects, history felt the full responsibility of its need of accuracy, unvarnished and unadorned, and poetry found place only for the destiny of nations and the ways of God with Man. Lowell has said that Wigglesworth's *Day of Doom* was the " solace of every fireside, the

flicker of the pine-knots by which it was conned, perhaps, adding a livelier relish to its premonitions of eternal combustion." There were lighter efforts here and there; there was the attainment of beauty and eloquence in many places; but the preponderating tone and labor were serious, profound, and utilitarian.

The Dutchman has not usually been credited with an overplus of lightsomeness and imagination; nevertheless he has not held to his opinions with too great strenuousness, and he has an abundance of cheerfulness to spread over the events of his life and career. And so in the Middle States a break could be made from the solemnity which overhung the skies of Puritanic New England. The heroic career of the hunter and the scout could be studied at first hand, and the essential humanity of the Indian rise into the knowledge of the onlooker and student.

Also the old world across the sea might now be studied with the mind of the new. The story-teller might find subjects near at hand, and the poet begin again his celebration of laughter and tears. And so Cooper and Irving and Halleck and Brockden Brown and the wits of Hartford could bring once more into the domain of literature the subjects and treatment which had before been conspicuously absent.

But all that, on the whole, was superficial; a deeper consciousness and a more real significance had to be reached. The national life and thought were coming into a comprehension of themselves in the premonitions of a great struggle near at hand. The schism which has had so immense an influence on art and life was clearly discerned; the two great antagonists were marshalling their vast array; the two social systems, with their differences, opposite implications, and

activities, were growing gradually aware that one or the other must be made subordinate. The vision of a single great state, inclusive of many and varied lesser political constituencies relatively independent and yet freely subordinated to an encompassing and invigorating whole, rose distinct and splendid above the horizon; a feeble and easily shattered league of warring nationalities recalled all the dark trials and somber eventualities of the past, from which the beneficent ocean separated the republic.

And so the third and great stage of literature comes to pass as an inevitable historic process. It has all the marks of real greatness. It is not a local movement, it is genuinely and really national; it is the expression of the deepest thought of the period; it is wide enough to cover the whole field of thought both in literature and politics; it connects itself with the best that is going on in other lands. The men who engage in it are not merely litterateurs, they are remarkable in various forms of activity; they are teachers, and ministers, and doctors, and diplomats, and statesmen, and citizens; they recognize fully that literature is a form of life; and it becomes ennobled the more the best aspirations and the highest ideals of mankind use its alluring forms for their revelation and investiture.

I am quite sure that the illustrious figures of that period will lose nothing by comparison with the great men of other lands. It has become somewhat the fashion to disparage them and to find them lacking in this or that excellence, which is assumed to be characteristic of the work of to-day, but the demonstration has usually been made from some special point of view of the critic, and the object of the criticism has not fitted well into a narrow and abstract theory. All literatures must be studied as a part of the great historic process

of the world, and the just understanding of a man or a system emerges when the relation to that encompassing process is discovered.

The new aspects of nature in a new land found the eyes which could appreciate them and the voice which could express them; the serenity and dignity of Bryant culminate in a restudy of Homer which in good measure has the freshness and vivacity of the original. The student desirous of nourishing himself at all literatures has no more engaging and unsparing energetic guide than Longfellow. When we now read of him as the second-rate lyrist of the domestic and the commonplace, we need only remember his wide and extensive scholarship, his translation of *Dante,* his large and finely-conceived *Christus,* and the amazing *tour de force* of the *Hiawatha,* in which the nature epic of a people capable only of short and fragmentary bits of poetry is made into a rounded whole, comparable to the Finnish Kalevala. Oliver Wendell Holmes, the fine and subtle doctor, with a curious fancy for the occult and subterranean sections of the human consciousness, indulges in the lambent play of his wit and his pathos about all the great themes that were agitating the minds of men. And Lowell, the gifted and the versatile, — humorist, diplomat, democrat, wonderful in prose and in verse, — has written for us the great odes with subjects noble and gracious, expressing the memories of the great past, the depths of the grandest of friendships, the sacrifice of youth for the love of country. The moral indignation of Whittier has lost nothing of its lightning flash, and our later story-tellers, after all, find themselves put to sorry straits to surpass Hawthorne in *The Scarlet Letter* and the *Blithedale Romance*. We still sit at the feet of Emerson, the liberator

and prophet, whose poetry has a ring above that of Wordsworth, and whose prose is the highest, completest expression yet given of the American Idea in all its heights and depths, in its wealth and consistency, in its freedom from the conventional, in its acquaintance with the entire field of thought, in its wonderful mingling of theory and practice.

It was quite inevitable that in a movement of this kind there should appear a man who would find himself fascinated by the form itself of his art, who would care little, — perhaps thereby narrowing and partially defeating himself, — for the content and substance of such message as he had to bring, but supremely for the manner in which he was to present it; who would have a remarkable love for the technique of his work; and who would carry finish and artistry to a point not readily attained by his compeers. It is quite extraordinary what marvelous effects can be produced by a player from the varied and successful manipulation of the exterior form of expression with which he has to deal. He has at his disposal an infinitude of resources, and he can build from them fantastic pagodas or impressive temples, quite sundered from attempts to fill these with an ideal content. He is the artist simply, and he will in his best moments make combinations which will have perennial charm and allurement.

Now Edgar Allan Poe seems to have been preëminently a man of this type. He had small interest in the great questions which disturbed the minds of his fellow workers in the field of literature. The events which were taking place about him, and which held consequences so far-reaching and momentous, made no abiding impression on him. The creation of a haunting melody or of an overwhelming effect in prose gave him a task to which he was temperamentally inclined

and to which he was willing to devote arduous and consecutive labor. It is a singular mistake to make about him that he was irregular and erratic in his work; he was really an indefatigable worker, and no man ever lavished upon his writings a more consistent or patient dovotion, correcting and refining until the perfect and enchased gold reflected every vagrant play of the sunshine.

He had a trying time of it in his life, and he seems still to be pursued by the furies who fastened upon his memory soon after his unfortunate taking off. Griswold's strange and unparalleled biography, which assailed him with every manner of malicious misrepresentation, appears still to have force enough in its dead remains to subject him to a kind of criticism seldom attempted in the case of other men. He was by no means the only member of the genus irritabile who allowed the intoxicating bowl occasionally to rob him of his wits, but in the case of the others the fault has long since been condoned, and the work they have left has been appraised irrespective of their own shortcomings. No one has been more unfortunate than Poe in those who have attempted to tell his story to mankind and set him right before the world which should appreciate him at his real worth. The refutation of misrepresentations has obscured the effort to relate his simple annals, and one of his latest and in some respects one of his best biographers, Mr. George E. Woodberry, makes a final disposition of him that is certainly disheartening. It is surely time now to relegate all that misery into the subordinate place to which it belongs, and to get a view of the man as he was in the exercise of his remarkable powers and in his assured successes. One tells the life of a great man very ill if one lays the chief stress upon his aber-

rations and leaves only half-heartedly touched the things which legitimately give him a place in the memory of his fellows.

Even the partisans and defenders of Poe have likewise done him serious injury. They have mistakenly endeavored to give him a place which it was quite impossible for him to occupy. Too much and too extravagant praise is quite as unfortunate as malevolent misrepresentation; in fact, the latter occasions a certain rebound, while the former leads to an attempted readjustment, which generally goes too far in the undesirable direction. Both have occurred in the case of Poe. The French symbolist poet, Mallarme, whose literary output is very small, gave up his time and attention to the translation of *The Raven;* he calls Poe one of the greatest men of genius of all time; Baudelaire made a translation of the tales, on which he expended the best of his art, and wrote an appreciation which Victor Hugo would not have disdained; Mr. Edmund Gosse in England speaks of him as the first of American writers; a verdict which leaves us wondering exactly what is meant by a great writer, and how far the critic is familiar with books produced on this side of the dividing ocean.

Then again Poe is a very unequal writer. His manner of life precluded the quiet and assured creation of works which should each represent the best that could be made of the material employed. It is here, no doubt, that a man's life plays into and around the task he has set for himself. The sad sincerity, which Emerson notes as one of the indispensable conditions of the results achieved by the masters, was wholly out of the question for Poe. Dependent upon his pen for his daily bread, apparently finding it difficult to content himself with any position very long, anxious, on the one hand, to do

something which he could honestly call good, and forced, on the other, to get his matter into the hands of the printer as quickly as possible, he fell back on the doubtful resource of writing for the moment, and then of subjecting his piece to endless subsequent criticism and alteration, in the hope of attaining that perfection of form which was to him infinitely desirable. The result, of course, is a body of writings which requires winnowing and selection, which demands a large amount of rejection, but which will, I am sure, present a number of ultimates quite the best of their kind.

Moreover, he had the foible of omniscience. Not satisfied with cultivating the field that was assuredly his own, he tried his hand at all sorts of devices and expedients. The whole course of history lay outspread before him, and he made forays in many and various directions. Egypt and Venice and Hungary and Greece, the mountains of the moon, the bottom of the sea, the Inferno, the occult, the subliminal, the paradises of a misunderstood Swedenborgianism, all called to him from the vasty deep, and he attempted responses. A great deal of it was not his metier at all, and the results have not been altogether conductive to the elevation and purification of his fame. This again makes it necessary to separate the wheat from the chaff, and another Matthew Arnold, who will do for Poe what Arnold did for his forerunner and master, Wordsworth, is now to be discovered.

Poe has written a tale called *The Imp of the Perverse,* in which he makes a good deal of the way an entirely unaccountable impulse takes possession of us, prompting us to do precisely the opposite of what our reason advised us, and misleading us into an impassable jungle of follies and misdeeds from which extrication, in his tragic putting of his

theme, is out of the question. The conception is not to be taken too seriously, and it is altogether improbable that Poe meant it other than as one of his *tours de force,* which have afforded his critics, and even his well-wishers, so much ground for objection. Mr. Swinburne somewhere speaks of the "subtle humor of scandalising," and he has made considerable practice of the art in his vigorous assaults upon the arch-enemy, Philistinism. He has not, any more than Poe, escaped the indignation, righteous and invidious, of the precisian and the upholder of the conventional. Both men have been accused of insincerity and premeditated mystification, just as Browning has been charged with intentional obscurity. In his *Philosophy of Composition,* Poe is said to have conjured up out of the depths of his imagination the way and method in which *The Raven* was composed. In effect, Poe is only setting up a strong plea for unity of tone and concurrence of all elements in the climacteric point of the composition, and he shows how he sought this end in his poem. The lesson is a good one in the art, and the genuineness of Poe in his best lyrics and tales needs no longer stand on guard in defence of itself.

In the best of his stories he attains a simplicity and a dignity which make them models of their kind. It is not a difficult thing to extract from him here and there specimens of a furious extravagance, against which the charge of mere scene painting might readily be made. His tendency, however, was in reality away from the wild splashing of his canvas with color, and the gray atmosphere of the morning, the cool freshness of the early spring, were more consonant with his temperament than the fervors of June or the rich and gorgeous hues of a New England fall. The tenor of his

mind was more toward music than painting, and the Muse presiding over the particular peak of Parnassus which he called his own, and where, listening to the echoes, he heard his poems, and then translated them into earthly speech, was a sober-vested virgin who did not cultivate exclusively the roses and raptures of passion. Indeed, throughout his poems and stories there is a singular reticence, a marked restraint and self-governance, which one would hardly expect in a man of his bringing up and antecedents.

The minute delineation of humanity which is characteristic of the fiction of to-day had not dawned upon Poe, although he was the forerunner of the vague and mysterious suggestiveness which belongs to certain schools of recent poetry, and some of these have recognized their obligation to him. Yet it is to be remembered that he was able to give to some of his creations the permanence which makes them a part of the common speech and consciousness of men. He had quite enough humanity to delineate certain problems of the moral life in such form as to gain for his presentations general currency and transmission to successive generations. A Dickens or a Geoge Eliot peoples the world around him with new and vivid personages who ingratiate themselves into the endless regard of mankind, and who are endowed and re-endowed with life by series after series of readers. Poe worked in a different sphere and with different material; he dealt with moods, with aspirations, with obsessions; he was not always on the hunt for the bizarre, and the abnormal; and in his genuine and lasting successes he gives a large typical delineation of a genuine experience which is human and significant and impressive. Stevenson's *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* has passed into a proverb. The charac-

ter goes straight back to Poe, and is no whit more germane to life and thought than Poe's works which are responsible for his coming into existence. The thorough working out of an experience, vital and profound, may be just as human as the creation of a Tito Melema or a David Cooperfield, and it has again and again proved a lasting addition to the precious things which mankind puts into its treasure house.

In his youth Poe fell under the influence of Byron, and the effects of this study remained with him always. The latter's Manfred has some inexplicable reason for complete dissatisfaction with life; he is put under the enigmatical dominion of a strange imprecation; he communes with spirits and witches, and finally makes a pilgrimage to the underworld in the pursuit of a phantom, who appears in a woman's form and dooms him to eternal remorse and isolation. The story made an indelible impression on Poe, and it appears and reappears in his productions. That he should be attracted to Coleridge was quite inevitable, and in his critical writings he seems to have followed in Coleridge's footsteps. The philosophy, however, which Coleridge had brought from Germany was not much to his liking; it savored altogether too greatly of the transcendentalism then at its height in New England, which was Poe's abhorrence and on which he expended his wit and satire. He can hardly be said to have had any sort of comprehension of it, and his amazing abuse of Carlyle displays some of his own singular limitations. His indebtedness to Moore also is considerable, and the luxurious scenery of *Lalla Rookh* found a ready response in him. His relations to the literature of France and Germany are not easily traceable, although the weird stories of Hoffman are not unlike his own, and his prose poem, *Eureka,* seems to hark back

to some French writers of the skeptical and materialistic school. He reached his literary independence quite early, however, and his distinctive note and quality are soon recognizable.

The story of his life can be briefly told. The Poe family were of some distinction, and the father was regarded as making a mesalliance when he married an actress. Mr. Barrett Wendell attributes some of the poet's characteristics to the roving habits of his parents, but they died when he was two years old, and the boy was then adopted into the family of Mr. Allan, a man of wealth, in Richmond. The same writer might perhaps have found an equally strong and veracious tendency in the direction of Puritanism, since Poe was born in the city of Boston. He was taken to England, and his school days there were a great success, and left in his mind some strong and agreeable memories. On his return to this country he was placed in the University of Virginia, which recently held celebrations in his honor, but his career here can hardly be called a satisfactory one. While at the University he published his first volume of poems, which makes plain how assiduously he had read his Byron and his Moore. The book was received with no high degree of appreciation, but it showed, certainly in a few poems, that a writer had appeared who was to be reckoned with. He entered West Point, but the life was not such as to comport with his restless and freedom-loving disposition, and he left it under a cloud. The Allans threw him on his own resources, and his literary career began. He married a cousin, and his life with her and her mother is an exhibition of constancy and nobility in complete contrast with the usual representations of him. He lived now in Richmond, now in Baltimore,

Philadelphia, New York, engaged in all sorts of work for periodicals and magazines, and earning a scant and precarious livelihood. He published his stories under the name of *Tales of the Arabesque and Grotesque*. During his stay in Philadelphia, he held the editorship of Graham's Magazine, an important and remunerative position, but this, like other places, he lost in some unaccountable way. The publication of *The Raven* made him famous on two continents. While they were living at Fordham, near New York, his wife died, and a few years later, on returning from Richmond, where he had been cordially received by his friends, he came to his strange and unhappy death in Baltmore. He was a young man, in the full possession of his powers, and should have had his best work all before him.

This is all in marked contrast with the habits and lives of his contemporaries. He had friends, advisers, opportunities. He was indefatigable, ardent, and a litterateur to his finger tips; he has left a considerable body of work; but a life so unsettled, so irregular, so subject to vicissitude, has made its impression upon his productions. In an older and more sympathetic community, things might, perhaps, have been different; he was par excellence the artist, dominated by his temperament, and living in an atmosphere not wholly congenial to a man of his type.

His works may be divided into three sections: Critiques, Stories, and Poems. His prevalent tone of mind had much to do with the success of his endeavors. He wrote some things because his natural idiosyncracy led to such composition; he wrote others because of an intellectual ambition to make his mark in a field to which he was less accustomed; and, finally, he wrote others in which his extraordinary endow-

ment united with his highest effort; and the result was a work which ranks among the best of its kind, which the world has accepted, and which seems assured of a long life and a steady admiration.

Among his critiques there is his lecture on *The Poetic Principle,* in which he unfolds his theory of poetry. He thinks that a long poem is a contradiction in terms, and he asserts that such a poem would never again be written. His prediction has hardly been verified. He thought that a poem longer than one hundred lines has no reason for its existence. Of course, he left out of his theory a consideration of the essential function of the memory. To show that the conception will hardly bear close inspection, we have only to reflect with what increased interest we return to our reading, how the characters and incidents become charged with new meaning as we grow more and more into them, and how the complication intensifies in its impression as we see it more deeply. He says in his lecture: "I would define in brief the poetry of words as the rhythmical creation of beauty. Its sole arbiter is taste. With the Intellect of the Conscience it has only collateral relations. Unless incidentally, it has no concern whatever with Duty or with Truth." Again, he makes this statement in his *Philosophy of Composition*: "The pleasure which is at once the most intense, the most elevating, the most pure, is, I believe, found in the contemplation of the Beautiful. When indeed men speak of beauty, they mean, precisely, not a quality, as is supposed, but an effect. They refer, in short, just to that intense and pure elevation of Soul — not of intellect or heart — which is experienced in consequence of contemplating the Beautiful. Now I designate Beauty as the province of the poem. Now the object,

Truth, or the satisfaction of the intellect and the object, Passion, or the excitement of the heart, are, although attainable to a certain extent in poetry, far more readily attainable in prose."

This idea of poetry he carried out in his practice. It seems a narrow and untenable notion, applicable perhaps to the lyric, but only to simpler manifestations thereof: nevertheless it has had a notable career. It was a starting point for the lyric school in France, and reached its extreme in a poet like Verlaine; it had a decided influence upon the English Pre-Raphaelites, and its echoes can be found in Morris and Swinburne and Rossetti. It really makes the artistic form the main thing, and is indifferent to the content. It makes all poetry vague and hazy and enigmatic. In a way, it emphasizes the musical side of the poem, and leaves its meaning as a subordinate consideration. It makes an abstraction of the emotional reaction accompanying every experience, and attempts to deal exclusively with that. It divorces literature from life and immerses one in a dreamland, where there are only color and darkness and, according to Shelley, the pleasure hid in melancholy gloom. Both in his stories and his poems, Poe exemplified his thought by his work, and he stands here as the forerunner of a host of men who have bettered his instruction. His theory of poetry accounts in some measure for his vogue on the continent of Europe and for the extravagant praise given him by European critics. We may consider the theory as a limiting of the significance of poetry to a single one of its elements, as the forcing of a mere abstraction into a prominence which does not belong to it, into giving to the emotional reaction a place which it could never claim for itself in this field; but it cannot be denied that the view

has had a following, and that Poe is distinctly one of its leaders and successful practitioners.

He had a natural bent toward metaphysics, and he has left a singular composition which he calls *Eureka*. In his introduction to this he calls it a prose poem. The ascription is of course a contradiction of the theory announced in the *Poetic Principle*, for there he states that prose is the language of truth, and poetry the language of feeling, and inasmuch as the two could only be brought together by making one of them wholly incidental to the other, the *Eureka* could merely be regarded as having too much truth for a poem or too much feeling for a philosophical discourse. Moreover, to call it a poem is to give up its right to be philosophy. For whatever philosophy may be, — whether it is considered as a temporary synthesis of phenomena, regulated by a logical system which is merely a method of thinking for the moment, to be overthrown by the next unaccountable upheaval of the Unknowable that encircles everything; or whether it is supposed to be a stream of philosophical reactions not capable of being brought into any sort of unity, but disclosing everywhere depths of a remarkable character, and apparently leading to regions beyond, in which we may believe, if we like, for nobody can prevent us from doing so; or whether we regard it as a series of accidental discoveries to which the activities of life give a more or less accidental confirmation, the whole under no circumstances allowing of established and permanent combination; or whether it indeed is a possible erecting of man beyond his purely individual self into the realm of certain and universal truth, — in whatever way we may look at it, philosophy is assuredly not poetry. The *Eureka* is a mixture of mathematical and idealistic speculations which brings

together in one view the varied activities of Poe, and it thus throws light on his intellectual life and artistic practice.

In his *Rationale of Verse* he stands on surer ground, and it is a subject for which he had every natural aptitude. There is no indication that Poe was in any way a musician; he most assuredly should have been; and music might have helped him over many of the difficulties that he encountered. It was left to another Southern poet, not unlike Poe in his tendencies, who was an accomplished musician, — I mean Sidney Lanier, — to take up the principles of versification and build them into the most satisfactory and consistent theory that has so far been advanced by any one, but to Poe belongs the honor of first having announced it, and having in the main developed it in its more important aspects.

Certainly the essay on versification is at high-water mark, and has brought order and consistency into a subject which from time immemorial has been a weltering chaos of contradictory rules and precepts. In making versification a section in the theory of music, the right point of view seems to have been attained, and a rationality at once showed itself which had never been found there before.

Poe was a professional critic, and did a great deal of reviewing for the periodicals with which he was connected. He had in him the making of a great critic. The narrowness of his artistic theories kept him within certain limitations, and, in the main, his attention seems to have been given to technical matters. He also had the fashion of seeking out salient points, which led to a neglect of the consideration of the whole. But he had the unconquerable courage of his opinions, he had a relentless hostility to charlatanry and pretensions, he was indifferent to popular noise and clamor,

and he had the faculty of genuine discernment which gave recognition of the true thing when it rose above the horizon.

In his tales he began with the story of adventure. While he was in Baltimore, in one of his crises of keeping the wolf from the door, he won a prize for his story called *A MS. Found in a Bottle.* He wrote quite early also his nearest approach to a full-fledged novel, *The Narrative of A. Gordon Pym.* These are tales of wild adventure reaching a morbid horror of invention which removes them from general sympathy or appreciation. Then follows the long series of stories which circumnavigate the globe, predict aerial conquest, sailing up to the moon, and descend through the maelstrom into the bowels of the earth. He was deficient in the sense of humor; indeed, one may say, perhaps, that he might have overcome some of the disasters of his life if he could have received them with a wholesome smile; his attempts at the humorous are rather sardonic and grotesque; a great many of these tales leave now a mixed impression; but he reaches the higher levels in some of them. The *Ligeia,* which he regarded as especially imaginative, is a gloomy story of a love that comes back from beyond the veil in a fashion repellant to most readers; but *The Fall of the House of Usher,* melancholy and tragic as it is, with the wonderful poem imbedded in it, and *William Wilson,* the prose rendering of *The Raven,* show what he could accomplish when he was allowed untrammeled exercise of his powers. In *William Wilson* he struck the note which we find again and again in his poems. Here is a man who has wasted his life and opportunities, who has not succeeded in the task he has set for himself, and on whom descend death and remorse and irretrievable ruin. One is at once reminded of Byron's *Man-*

fred. For *The Gold Bug* and the *Murders in the Rue Morgue* the admirers of subtle reasoning will have a sufficient liking. M. Dupin is the king of detectives, and M. Valdemar certainly has extraordinary revelations to make.

His early poems show distinctly the models whom he placed before himself. The *Tamerlane* is Byron, and the *Al Aaraaf* is Moore. Then he made his usual attempts in various directions. He began a play which he had the good sense to leave unfinished. He did more or less conventional work in the way of sonnets and commonplace lyrics and blank verse. Then there came upon him his theory of poetry which he followed to the end of his days, and out of which arose the poems that make so large a share of his claim to remembrance, and which have occasioned so great a stir in literary history. They are the vague and melodious expression of dominant moods; they are like the music of a dream; they are purposely left mysterious and strange; and most of them play around the theme of a man different from his fellows, having committed the unpardonable sin, — however that may be conceived, — finding himself wandering through unknown regions out of space and time, and having lost by death or misconduct all that he ever held dear, *The Raven* and *Ulalume* are characteristic expressions of the mood, and probably no one who has made similar attempts has ever gone beyond these. Among his other poems, *Annabel Lee,* and the three lyrics set like gems in the three stories, are finished productions. *Israfel* is perhaps his best achievement; *The Bells, The Sleeper, The City in the Sea,* could belong to no other master.

The following description of the poet a few months before his death is given on the authority of Mrs. Weiss, at whose

father's house the poet was a guest in the last days at Richmond: "Erect in stature, cold, impassive, almost haughty in manner, soberly and fastidiously clad in black, to a stranger's eye he wore a look of distinction rather than beauty; on nearer approach one was more struck by the strongly marked head, with the broad brow, the black curly hair brushed back, the pallid, careworn, and, in repose, the somewhat haggard features; but the physical fascination of the man was felt at last to be in his eyes, jet black with a steel gray iris, clear as crystal, restless, ever expanding and contracting as, responsive with intelligence and emotion, they bent their full, open, steady, unshrinking gaze from under the long black lashes that shaded them. To men he was cordial, to woman he showed a deference that seems always to have suggested a reminiscence of chivalry, and in society with the young he forgot his melancholy."

Willis says of him: "Some four or five years since, when editing a daily paper in this city, Mr. Poe was employed by us for several months as critic and sub-editor. Time went on and he was invariably punctual and industrious. With his pale, beautiful and intellectual face as a reminder of what genius was in him, it was impossible of course not to treat him always with deference. With the prospect of taking the lead in another periodical, he at last voluntarily gave up his employment with us, and through all this considerable period we have seen but one presentment of the man — a quiet, patient, industrious, and most gentlemanly person, commanding the utmost respect and good feeling by his unvarying deportment and ability."

The image of the poet comes up before us, reserved, sensitive, exacting, and not readily entering into relations with

his fellow men. He needed sympathy, friendship, and understanding; he wanted to do a kind of work which was not easily appreciated by his contemporaries; it was a strenuous and battling time; the anti-slavery agitation was in progress; the great orators in Congress were pitted against each other; for all that Poe had small regard. He was the litterateur and artist; he wanted to do the most perfect work possible; he had been bitten by the gadfly of perfection, and the one that has been so inoculated must follow the phantasm over land and sea. We may say, no doubt, that the perfection he sought was an insubstantial perfection; that the only perfection worth while is the noblest synthesis of life attainable by man, and clothed in a form which is not a mere externality, but a complete manifestation of that synthesis in every line and point and articulation; but to have announced the principle was a work decidedly worth while. The clouds about him have now all been lifted; after all, he fought a good fight and he has come to his reward; a recent French writer, M. Jules Claretie, places him with the great idealists of all times; that may be excessive and probably mistaken praise, but the pendulum is bound to swing in the reverse direction. The main facts of his life are all known, and they have no more than the ordinary importance; they need to be given that subordination which they deserve, and we have no more reason to exaggerate them than we have to exaggerate certain facts in the life of De Quincey or Coleridge; we need to study his writings, winnow the wheat from the chaff, and record him aright to posterity. We need not pay attention to the statement of a brilliant Englishman, Mr. George Bernard Shaw, who says we have had only two literary men, Poe and Walt Whitman; that seems like saying that England

has had only two literary men, Robert Louis Stevenson and William Blake. We shall give Poe the place among the immortals which belongs to him. We shall see him freed from the anguish and torment which were his portion while here, a figure really austere and perhaps attenuated, but bearing in his hands some gifts, exquisitely fine and finished, which are indeed the very best of their kind. We repeat for him the words of his own hymn:

"At morn — at eve — at twilight dim,
Maria, thou hast heard my hymn,
In joy and woe, in good and ill,
Mother of God, be with me still!
When the Hours flew brightly by,
And not a cloud obscured the sky,
My soul, lest it should truant be,
Thy grace did guide to thine and thee;
Now, when storms of Fate o'ercast
Darkly my Present and my Past,
Let my Future radiant shine
With sweet hopes of thee and thine."

THE TRANSCENDENTALISTS OF NEW ENGLAND

THE condition of American literature eighty years ago was not such as to inspire the patriotic admirer of his land and generation with an impulse to enthusiastic expression of praise and thanksgiving. The names, upon whose sonority we now depend to exceed the limits of our wave-washed shores and penetrate the ears and hearts of aliens not naturally inclined to the reception of the thoughts and harmonies of the world, had not then begun to explicate the music that lurked unrecognized and unlooked for in their homely and unimaginative syllables. What was to be expected from cognomens so unpromising as Cooper, and Longfellow, and Poe, and Whittier? The hopeless mediocrity and middle-class flavor, bound to be general in a country which built its commonweal upon the supposed humanity of every one of its members, and whose political and social atmosphere was pervaded by the noxious vapors of human equality, rested upon them as an incurable stain in their very fiber and substance. Here were no class distinctions, no aristocracies, to speak of, whether of rank or wealth or learning. It is true that the young aspirant for literary honors was born into traditions and scholastic habitudes to whose empire he was expected to pay the voluntary homage of an obedient feudatory, but the unhappy example of his forefathers in making light of similar bondages and prescriptions, in their case far more sacred, time-honored, and obligatory, filled him with a becoming sense of his own importance, and a wholesome deter-

mination to accept of the old as much as commended itself to his needs and intentions, and to permit the remainder to find its unimpeded way to the limbo of forgetfulness with small regret on his part. Nevertheless it may not be undesirable to inquire what those traditions and habitudes were as a sort of analysis of the soil from which the later and more luxuriant literary growth and flowerage sprang, wearing a crown of light, and dissipating the mists and obscurities that overhung the new nation and hid us from the understanding of lands not over prone to look with favorable eyes upon a political attempt, which, if successful, would leave them in the condition of a polity outlived and doomed to comparatively speedy dissolution.

Such literary movement as America had during her Colonial period was perforce a reflection of the literary movement of the mother country; and yet, there were some evident differences and more or less striking peculiarities. The traditions of an elder period remained longer with the colonists, and a certain Elizabethan savor was perceptible when all traces of that great age had vanished from the polished periods of the wits and essayists who succeeded the great poets and dramatists. The so-called quaintnesses of New England speech are directly derivable from the speech, written or spoken, then in vogue in the parent land, and one has only to turn to the pages of Hooker, Beaumont and Fletcher, and the rest, to discover there in classic usage what has been thrown up to us as a reproach and abomination. The absence of established organs of criticism, and a generally cultivated auditory, gave a loose thread to individual caprice in thought and expression; the fantastical element, a heritage of the Middle Ages, and successfully subjected to artistic con-

trol by Shakespeare and his contemporaries, burst all fetters and reveled at pleasure in the productions of weaker men. Even grave theological writings masqueraded under such titles as *Nails Fastened or Proposals of Piety Complied With, Ornaments for the Daughters of Zion,* a discourse which directs the female sex how to express the fear of God and obtain temporal and eternal blessedness. With the prevalence of a French influence in English literature, the clearness and directness of prose took the place of the ardors and splendors of poetry. Then came the age when English prose, aware for the first time of her separate and important existence, achieved the earlier and more vivacious steps of her progress. Clearness, simplicity, manly expression of emotion took the place of obscure and far-fetched allusion, and the often ludicrous intrusion of the lofty extravagance admissible only to poetry in her flights into realms above or beneath this crass and rugged sphere of realities, in which the days of our life are spent, and its necessary business is transacted. The language of the time was full of vigor and alive in all its syllables. These characteristics were repeated in such essays in literature as our forefathers made. Moreover, the conquest of a virgin wilderness, and the reclamation of a continent from natural valuelessness to the subserviency of civilized needs, heightened these qualities, and imparted to them a novel intensity. The circle of ideas within which these writings moved was of necessity a narrow one, although divided into several zones and segments. The gloomy Puritanic theology, that darkened with its shadow all that came under its influence, brightened into a more genial compromising spirit in the middle colonies, and fairly abandoned the field, beaten and conquered before the joyousness

and cavalier elegancies that the warmer gales of Virginia inspired.

The poetry which enlivened the leisure and adorned the lighter moments of our forerunners in the torch-dance of history was of a sufficiently ponderous and utilitarian kind, so as to be little obnoxious to charges of seducing the spirit into flowery paths, where could be gathered only incentives to worldliness, or a forgetfulness of the weight and responsibility of this existence in its perilous suspension between condign and moveless darkness on the one hand and monotonous blessedness on the other. Mrs. Anne Bradstreet, the tenth Muse, rarely condescended to those elemental emotions out of which is woven the texture of our daily lives; that was altogether too familiar, too much involved in the darkness of naturalness, too interesting to our human affections, to receive the irradiation of her poetical idealizings; nothing short of the conflicting potencies of the four primary elements, Earth, Air, Fire, and Water, or the doings of men in ancient Babylon or Assyria, were worthy of her efforts. As Prof. Tyler says, such poetry could be read "without any twinges of self-reproach; it was not too pleasant; it was not trivial or antique or amusing; men were in no danger of losing their souls by being borne away on the vain and airy enticements of frivolous words." But the effect of all this activity was to lay the foundations of a style divergent far enough from that of the mother country to give it a character and physiognomy of its own, a style happily combining the lucidity and tranquil ease of prose with an imaginative coloring that was a heritage of earlier and Elizabethan times. Literature in the true sense did not exist, but the preparation for it was strenuously going on. Also the mix-

ture of nationalities, each embodying aims and aspirations of its own, began to modify the seething mass; a new type of character and a new form of expression were rapidly coming to the surface; the solidity of English manners and English expression was in process of transformation to something more gracious and adapted to airier and lighter conceptions. The free French spirit, disdaining prescription, no matter how hoary with eld and venerable with the miraculous glamor of time, claiming the world of knowledge and emotion for its own, and joyously weaving it into fabrics for its imaginations to wear, solely in virtue of their charm, adventurous to the extreme in the application of all new ideas to artistic purposes, transplanted to the new world, laughed into defeat the sober and conservative adhesion to established forms which English sobriety so insisted upon. And Spain with her grave humor and majestic symbolizing of loftiest ideas in sonorous verse added another element whose influence is not to be overlooked. Under a brighter sun, and clearer skies, and a less foggy atmosphere, the fusion of all these elements went on with rapidity, and the liquor of a new inspiration was fermenting in the brains and hearts of men, and a literary product more or less novel was on the way to make its claims upon human ears and attention. New climatic influences furthered the creation of a new physical type, and the spiritual effervescence promised something rich and strange.

The potencies which are essential to a new birth in literature were gradually unfolding themselves. But there was yet needed a national sentiment which should furnish a background and support for all such endeavors. The successful revolt of the colonies, and the magnificent spectacle of a nation forming itself into a genuine political unity, supplied

this desideratum. The elements were mixed in something like due proportion; the times were propitious and the result was at hand. Moreover, a whole phase of national existence had passed away into a remoteness which gave it the romance needed for successful application to artistic purposes; modern scientific realism was a thing altogether undreamed of; the immediate fight with the wilderness was over; wealth and leisure were beginning, and the higher nature of man demanded sustenance. The heroism of the men who had abandoned ease and comfort and happiness for the sake of a freedom which they could not find at home, the vigor which had converted a barren waste into a smiling expanse of field and village, the courage which had inspired a cause apparently hopeless and forlorn and led it to victory, evoked an answering response in souls alive to nobility of purpose and greatness of execution. The poet Clough sings in one of his lyrics:

> "How in heaven's name did Columbus get over
> Is a pure wonder to me, I protest,
> Cabot and Raleigh too, that well read rover,
> Frobisher, Dampier, Drake and the rest;
> Bad enough all the same
> For those that after came;
> But, in great heaven's name,
> How he should ever think
> That on the other brink
> Of this wild waste, Terra Firma should be,
> Is a pure wonder, I must say, to me."

But the passage had been made through greater difficulties than the weltering waste of ocean; through hunger and poverty, through religious and political strife, through bloodshed and battle, the way had been followed and the wonder of it all

was plainly to be seen. Then the great future that loomed in the opening heavens of achievement, the promise of destiny vast and mysterious, because so little unfolded, exercised a controlling fascination. The rise of the colleges, the spread of the newspaper and periodical literature, furnished incentives, and promoted unanimity of feeling. The morning red hovered resplendent upon the horizon, and the voices of song birds awoke to greet the increasing effulgence. Here then was a public unanimous for a time and ready to listen, a vehicle of expression plastic and naturally adapted to fall in draperies fine and gracious, a stock of ideas ranging from the gloomy religious musings of Puritanism to the impulses inherent in the effort to establish freedom for every man upon the earth's green expanse, something very like a legendary lore to draw upon for materials of story, and above all, the determination to subject all the achievement of the past to a re-investigation before the bar of the individual judgment. Freedom in the state found its counterpart in freedom in the use of man's reason. And then besides there was the Red Man, about whom it was so easy to weave a halo of story and mystery, and who had a whole treasure house of legends and marvels of his own to explore and draw from.

But the new literature yet worshiped at the old shrines; it made pilgrimages to Europe, and sought satisfaction in the old splendors; but a freedom that savored of newer realizations. If Irving lingered in the shadows of Westminster Abbey, and laid the tribute of his gentle humor and fine literary workmanship at the feet of Addison, other writers deserted the shores of England for pilgrimages through sunny France, or wanderings up and down the highways and byways of mystical, legend-haunted Germany,

or amid the stately and heroic imaginings of Spain. Plainly the old seriousness was giving way to a lighter touch and even a levity of treatment which made mirth at what had been held in soberest reverence. Truthful aspiration and gayety were no longer to be suppressed by the frown of much requiring eld. They took to story writing, an amusement not to be contemplated without many misgivings, and to be pursued under many reservations. Brockden Brown, nevertheless, published his weird and melodramatic romances. The poetry became marvelously sentimental; there were mysterious invocation of the muse, flutterings of nameless bliss at the sight of golden sunsets glittering over pellucid waters, and fine raptures over the flutter of white draperies, that indicated the presence of feminine and angel visitors on this rude and forbidding earth, who somehow found these suspirations rather comical than otherwise. But one deeper and more genuine result of poetic striving soon began to manifest itself; a profound sympathy with Nature in the novel aspects in which she presented herself to the Western eye and heart.

The effects of all these influences on young and ardent minds in New England were magical. An era of the greatest import to mankind seemed opening, and the efforts of those taking part in it were of the largest scope and grandest intention. The generous ferment which underlies all serious purpose found a noble spiritual liquor in which to work its clarifications. That the country needed a literature which should express what it had already accomplished, and what the future promised, was clear to the bold and determined spirits who were prepared to plunge into any speculations however mystic and audacious. This literature should bear

upon it the impress of genuine originality, should be the result of ponderings and novel discoveries, should robe itself in draperies not woven in any looms of the old world. The whole past should be called to the witness stand and divulge before a new tribunal what it had of permanent value and eternal worth. The conditions upon which society depends were anew to be investigated, and, if possible, a nobler order of things inaugurated. The skepticism which assailed the loftiest convictions of man was to be met in daring wrestle, and floored forever. Religious faith, no longer dependent upon outer and mere historic authority, was to be built upon the indestructible foundation of the transcendental vision of God. What vistas of achievement unfolded themselves to young and ardent spirits! What ecstacies of meditation in groves where the great and good gathered imperishable garlands before our prosaic period! What opportunity for those deeds which must carry with them unfailing fascination and alluring charm!

The beginning of such movements who shall discover? The influence is in the air; the seed has been sown in the soil; and the plant and flowerage spring up at once everywhere. The Unitarians of New England had broken away in a greater or less degree from the bonds of authority, and had accustomed the minds of men to a freer discussion of questions ordinarily supposed beyond the pale of question. But in 1832 Ralph Waldo Emerson preached the "epoch making" sermon, which made him no longer the mouthpiece of a creed or doctrine, but the voice of a new effort at self expression.

The revolt against the merely traditionary was fairly inaugurated; it was a renaissance of the Protestant move-

ment; the earlier one had not gone far enough; what was humane and rational proclaimed itself as identical with the divine in life and thought. As early as 1828 Mr. Emerson had presented the *Carlyle Miscellanies* to the public. As before mentioned, in 1832, Mr. Emerson preached that sermon in which he laid down his priesthood and raised issues in whose settlement on the free platform of thought he devoted the remainder of his life. In 1836 appeared *Nature,* in which the whole system of Emersonian thought received exposition as systematic and complete as anything to be found in his later writings. In 1838 came the wonderful address before the Cambridge Divinity School, which aroused all the latent enthusiasm of young hearts and made the older ones aware that their opinions were to be assailed in a hand-to-hand conflict in which there was small prospect of quarter. In the same year James Walker, the favorite professor of Moral Philosophy at Harvard College, welcomed the new philosophy. The wrath of the conservative was indeed aroused, and the sensationalism of the time, the sense-thought, if that term be allowed, of the period felt itself tottering in its hitherto seemingly unassailable preëminence. Mr. Andrews Norton and the rest arose in defense of the positions assailed, but the attack went bravely on. George Ripley and Theodore Parker joined the ranks of the new school, and both displayed the skill and learning of practiced thinkers and fearless controversialists. In 1840 appeared the first series of essays by Emerson, that incomparable volume in which are contained the great and characteristic pieces on *Self-Reliance,* the *Over-Soul, Circles.* But there were other adherents of the new faith, and it would be a great mistake to consider the transcendental movement as solely

a theological one. It had by this time swung loose from all theological moorings, and was sailing on the free ocean of rational investigation, bound for such ports as the freest of speculations would lead the reason to rest and abide in. Orestes Brownson started the *Boston Quarterly Review* in 1838. That restless and audacious intelligence swept from sphere to sphere in thought, and planted itself firmly wherever its changeful experiences led it. He studied whatever came in his way, and believed with all his strength whatever he had come to see. But no doctrine appeared to satisfy him long, and it is not strange that he reverted at last to a more dogmatic point of view than the one from which he originally revolted. He is a significant figure, and illustrates especially some inevitable tendencies of all intellectual movements. Those who cannot rest in the matured results of earnest prosecution of the truth for its own sake, and by its own inherent and unassisted methods, an external authority, whose veracity is unquestioned, whose credentials are immemorial and hoary with age, whose historic evolution is parellel with the loftiest achievement of the race, and most permanent realizations of goodness and wisdom in the earth's domain, goodness and wisdom so far transcending all measures of time as to substantiate their claims to come form a higher and purer source, an external authority of such character, must infallibly draw within the circle of its influence. The organ of the movement was the *Dial,* begun July 1840 and ending April 1844. Its editors were Margaret Fuller and Ralph Waldo Emerson. Its contributors constituted a band of scholars whose superior the country had not seen, and it may be questioned if the country has seen since. George Ripley, James Freeman Clarke, Henry Thoreau,

John S. Dwight, A. Bronson Alcott, and many others filled its pages with papers that have not yet lost their freshness and are not likely to lose it for some time to come. Of course it was received with a chorus of ironical abuse, and a humorous condescension that must now appear to us more comical than the most unbridled contempt that its pages presented. The critics succeeded mainly in displaying their own limitations, and were quite unable to take the measure of the strange phenomenon. The conversations of Margaret Fuller must not be omitted from an enumeration of the chief channels in which transcendentalism was addressing the public and molding opinion. Their influence is difficult to estimate; it was hardly less than all her written and published productions taken together.

The effect of all these stirrings on young and ardent minds it is easy to conceive: amelioration of the unhappy condition of mankind, the righting of wrongs festering for ages, the establishment of the era of good will and peace on earth, at last seemed conclusions not ready to descend from the heavens. The deepest problems of mind and heart, the mysteries that environ the destinies of the race, the demonstrations that at length promised a test to unresolved questions, shone upon the mental vision and assured themselves as solid realities, and not, as those glooms had so often proven, a mere pageantry of cloud and sunset, an unsubstantial masonry of woven wind and scattered sunlight. Nature was answering her interrogators as she had not done before; her high-priest, Thoreau, uttered his priests at her altar, and from under the shadows of the pine forest at Walden came responses, whose music pervaded the sense even if their purport was often as dark as that of other oracles. Poetry and

was to put them into practice. Not that the transcendentalists accepted these speculations in their entirety; far from it; they could accept no doctrines which infringed the individual rights of the individual man; but the establishment of an ideal society, a community in which brotherhood should be a thing of real significance and not a mere glittering generality, a commonweal which should definitely accomplish the best culture of each member, was an ideal, fascinating irresistibly to the fraternity that adventured upon the Brook Farm Endeavor. We know how Hawthorne in his diary threw over it the lambent play of his delicate humor, and although he disavows the application of the Blithedale Romance to what he observed at Brook Farm, yet we cannot doubt that his last words upon such attempted ameliorations of human social conditions are to be found in that book.

We can readily see that such efforts are dependent for what success they secure on the very conditions which they impugn; the very society from which they flee is the constant source of the blessings which they most prize and enjoy. Thoreau at Walden communes with the great writers of the Orient, and wanders with delight through translations of Hindoo books, which were made by help of that wicked wealth he would have no lot or share in; we shall all at last be obliged to confess our allegiance to that universal spirit of history, which has through the ages built the institutions through which we attain the best that has been attained, and which are in truth the beneficent supporters of all we do; nevertheless we cannot withhold our sympathy from undertakings whose inspiration was to hasten the time when that which is now the appanage of the few shall be the daily bread and drink of all. The effort for the emancipation of

woman need not be ashamed of its maternity in Margaret Fuller, and her paper on the great Lawsuit remains among the best literature of the movement contributed by America. The mystical Alcott carries his reforms into his daily food and drink; and his singular spirituality of good health maintained to an advanced age is a stronger advocate of his practices than his theoretical defenses.

But the intellectual tendencies and developments of the movement are the most interesting and permanent. The influences emanating from the ardor of speculation and resolute pursuit of ideas to their ultimate logical consequences, which were part and parcel of the transcendentalist's equipment, spread far beyond the confines of New England, and club after club, coterie after coterie, in larger cities, in villages and hamlets all over the land, owe their inspiration and continuity to Emerson and his compeers, so that his tours and those of his friend Alcott seemed like the progress of some person possessed of reverence that belongs of right to power whose exercise is for what is noblest and most elevating. Many a man, no matter how far his present opinions may diverge, looks back to his first acquaintance with these names as the first splendor that arose on the night of his intellectual wanderings, and the constellation remains fixed as one of the means by which to guide the ship of his thought through the tumultuous storms of modern materialism, agnosticism, pessimism, and the remainder of the vaporous blankets shutting out the sky and stars. We may complain of the lack of system in Emerson's writings; but, if system leads us into the bog and quagmire of such self-contradictory notions as that of the Unknowable, which in one and the same breath is lauded as the known source and

fountain of all things, and the unknown what-is-it behind all phenomena, like a Jack-in-the-box ready to pounce upon you most unexpectedly, and happily at last incapable of inspiring its original terror, better a thousand times the inconsecutiveness of the transcendentalist.

The life and spirit of the intellectual ferment of the time was liberty. Above every achieved result of investigation was placed the determination to make such results answerable at the bar of reason for what they were and what they intended. Nothing accepted or generally believed was too sacred for such demonstration of the grounds on which it rested; religion, art, philosophy, science were passed in review and each must listen to a verdict upon its claims. Boundless freedom and horizon; that was the demand of the scholar, and every outward authority seemed almost an impertinence.

This freedom was accompanied by its necessary ally and co-worker, boldness in the pursuit of ideas rising resplendent upon the consciousness. There were no doubts expressed as to the power of the human soul; discussions of the limitations belonging to man's faculties were little to the taste of the fearless navigator in spiritual realms marvelous and novel; there were no problems placed beyond the pale of human investigation; indeed it was impossible that there should be; with the postulate of absolute freedom, comes another; this freedom is itself the deepest essence of the universe, and its own creations are the only realities. This freedom is no personal possession; it is rather the being and life of all men; to allow its unimpeded action, save by the laws itself frames for itself, is to usher and conduct into all that is permanent and eternal. This has been the claim of idealism in all ages,

and the New England idealists were not slow in making it. God, Immortality, Life, Fate, Substance, Reality were the themes most interesting to man, and most susceptible of discussion and analysis.

This method when applied to the study of Nature was as fruitful and significant in its results. Nature was all alive; she was a symbol of the eternal mind that was mirrored in her. Every new fact, every new theory, every discovery, the more marvelous, the better, were precisely what the transcendentalist wanted; to him Nature was throughout her expanse the manifestation of spiritual potencies; mind infinitely divided, as Schiller says in his *Philosophical Letters;* every new law, every systematic procedure therein discovered, but clinches the argument, and makes all the movements and periodicities of Nature the more consonant to the movements and periodicities of mind.

The atmosphere in which the transcendentalists moved was tonic and inspiring. To them it would have seemed a matter of supererogation to engage in speculations on subjects, no matter how profound, if they had no relation to practice. The conduct of life was the subject above all other subjects. The Puritan remained in them in the steadfast regard to noble living and right doing. Morality has never had loftier teachers or more inspired prophets; but there was no effort to isolate morality from the beliefs which underprop it and alone make it possible. The universal and eternal law of right, as Kant long ago demonstrated, presupposes Freedom as the basis of all responsibility, Immortality as a field for its ultimate and perfect exercise, and a Lawgiver to afford it sanction and invest it with authority. Emerson in the wide range of his thought endeavors to do

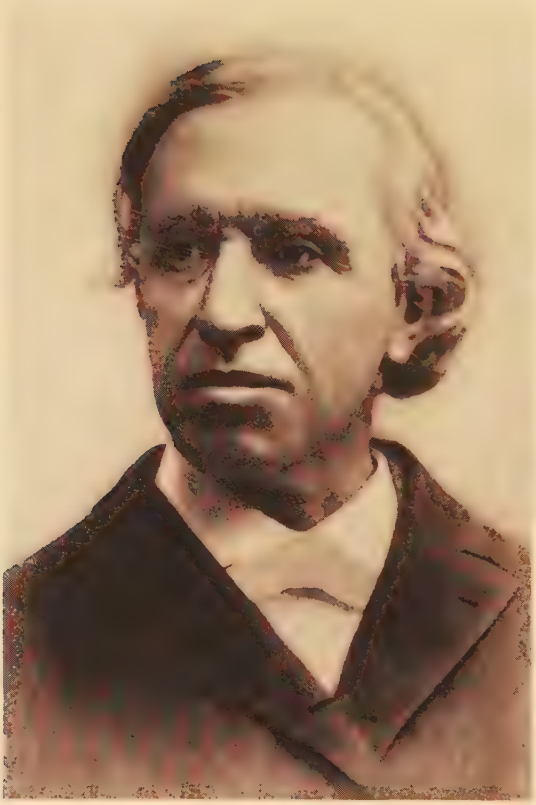
justice to its varied demands: in the *Essays,* the *Over-Soul* and *Circles,* stand side by side with *Self-Reliance* and *Love;* the latter are based upon the former; action requires nothing less than the universal to give it spring and impetus; the merely expedient, the trivial, the transitory are too slight to hold the fixed regard of mankind.

The mysticism charged to these writings is largely due to the expression; and yet we have no very great reason to quarrel with this expression. Every new literature is strange to the generation which bears it; the mother seems hardly to know her own child, and is inclined to thrust it forth upon the mercy of strangers; if we take up the Dial now, we wonder that any one found difficulty with what seems so natural to us. And yet the delving in literary quarries disused for many years, the working in mines of ore which had been long abandoned, gave to the diggers a somewhat uncanny aspect. A man who gave his days and nights to enthusiasm and the gorgeous Neo-platonism of Thomas Taylor might be expected to have something unusual about his modes of talking and thinking; devotion, exclusive and patient, to Cudworth, and Henry More, and the rest of the English mystics or alchemists or whatso they denominated themselves, might give the worshipper a physiognomy somewhat unlike the ordinary and conventional; still the strangeness is no greater than one will find in the most flourishing poetry of to-day. Moreover, the mysticism came as an essential part of the work done. The writers were averse to system and systematic exposition; the logical method appeared to them not a means for attaining truth, but an attempt to put it in a strait-jacket, and divest it of life and health. Systematic Philosophy requires a select body of students, and an insti-

tution to support it; it appears also in general as the final expression and consummation of many lives of thought, which have at last been brought together in one view. There has never been an opportunity for such an attempt on this side of the Atlantic; and Philosophy when it drops out of system, and travels away from dogmatism, is mysticism, and cannot be otherwise; it is the having of insights, glimpses of verity all the more dazzling for their isolation; such writings have great inconsecutiveness, but are like a succession of gems strung upon a golden thread. The objection has often been made against Emerson that you can read him backwards as well as forwards; but if we reach the plane of his thought, we shall not find ourselves disturbed by the mysticism.

Thus the great men and women struggled and toiled; they attempted to fathom those problems of life and destiny whose depths no plummet has ever sounded, and which will remain forever abysses into which speculations will plunge and bring thence newer and nobler treasures; the fine enthusiasm that pervaded them may have led them into strange and impenetrable thickets of thought; they may be accused of vagueness, a tendency to leap to conclusions, a quaintness of expression that borders on the comic; they expected too much, and hoped to ameliorate the world more rapidly than can be done with the good dame, who prefers the slow process of the centuries to which she has been accustomed; they revolted from much that they were afterwards obliged to accept, and accepted some things which they were afterwards obliged to reject; but the spectacle of such single devotion to truth, of such inspiring hopefulness, of such vigorous thinking, stands alone in the history of the land,

and its rival has not yet appeared. When making up the record of what we have done in our brief experiment of establishing free institutions, we must not leave out of account what was done by these pioneers in the continent of free thinking.



DAVID SWING, POET-PREACHER OF
CENTRAL MUSIC HALL, 1880–1894

DAVID SWING

1830–1894

I DO not believe that America ever produced a man in whom the severest results of thought assumed a more engaging and alluring form than in David Swing. We hear him repeatedly called the poet among preachers and when we try to interpret for ourselves what is meant by that phrase, we find it to be that he profoundly meditated on the significance of the world, and then gave his meditations an eloquence of appeal which found its way straight to the hearts of his listeners.

The professional philosopher is not satisfied with any form for his thought except the one which itself has made; he will take nothing from any field extraneous to the one in which he is laboring; content and expression for him are one; to leave something over against his system unexplained would be to contradict the very effort and intent with which he set out. Such toils, however, seem to belong to some region where it is hard to find oneself at home, where, as at the top of mountain peaks, it is even difficult to breathe.

No more gracious and lovely function can be conceived than to be willing to toil in that difficult realm for oneself, and to return with the strength and insight which such toiling gives, and to interpret for all mankind the world in which they live, the troubles which assail them, the hopes for which they ask assurance and illumination.

We have had two men who have done this for us, and I

doubts by our mere breath and word, but only that all truth is organic, and that we can live in the high sphere of unity as well as amid the distracting torments of restlessness and difference.

The chief note of David Swing's thought was progress and hope. He saw how much had been gained, how the significance of every element of our being had deepened, how much more all the details of our living signified than ever before, that the modern home had in it realizations of which an Oriental monarch or mediaeval baron never dreamed. Since so much had been done, since everywhere we saw how the good was more and more becoming the all, since the triumph of the high and noble appeared always clearer and clearer, was it not to be trusted that the evils which beset us, the terrible disasters which encompass us, would also like their gloomier forerunners yield to the potent forces which make for righteousness and genuine success? To-day is larger than the past; to-morrow will be larger and finer than to-day.

The genuine thinker has perfect faith in his thought, and is willing to follow it into whatsoever regions it may lead him. He is not troubled with small doubts and difficulties; he may fully see the magnitude of the problems with which he is dealing, but if thought produced them, thought can also solve them; above all he is not tormented by the way in which he is going to express his message to men; he has such confidence in the truth, that he is sure that the simplest and directest expression of it will be sure to meet the fullest and largest response. It was one of the remarkable things about David Swing's delivery of his carefully prepared sermons that he left his thought unimpeded to find its way

into the mind and heart of his listeners. For eloquence and rhetoric in the ordinary senses of them he evidently had small use; the devices to which speakers resort were impossible to him; he presented the best that he had, and he felt sure that it would go straight to the best in you.

The work of the negative thinker is necessarily evanescent; he may assist in removing difficulties; but with the completion of that his function is over; it is the man who does not talk too much about the limitations of human intelligence, and the need of much caution, and the insolubility of problems, but who courageously uses the instrumentalities which he possesses, and makes his discoveries, and adds something to what we know, or inspires us with deeper faith, who belongs to the benefactors. In the real, that is to say, spiritual history of this country, no influence will be found nobler, more permanent, more widespreading, than that of David Swing.

DAVID SWING

The engulfing night that clips the world around
Has reason to rejoice;
The voicelessness that girds the realm of sound
Receives another voice.

Whither our eager eyes can follow not
Friend after friend recedes,
Leaving the earth a cold and wintry spot
Where every footstep bleeds.

Him, too, we lose who stood upon his height,
Fearless, erect, and strong,
Uttering his message from the soul of right
Above the waiting throng.

Shall we not hear again those words of cheer,
Nor see those eyes that shine,
Nor hang upon that face majestic, dear,
And aspect leonine?

Whither has fled that over-mastering force,
That swift illumining wit?
Upon what strange and more entrancing course
Does that fine humor flit?

Deeper (we hope) the truth that charms his gaze,
Fairer the outstretched scene,
Nobler the stars that round him roll and blaze,
Purer the meadow's green.

Patient, serene, he bore the burdened years,
Felt the great world's deep woe,
Faced the new questions, crushed the newer fears,
Saw the sun's rising slow.

Into the dark that changeless soul has passed,
Into the void those tones,
Wherein the all-embracing truth was glassed
Like light in precious stones.

Nay, grief mistakes; whither he goes is light,
'T is we are dark, indeed;
'T is we who dwell within the impending night,
Who feel the breathless need.

Lo! as I strain my upward looking eyes,
The shadowy death grows fair,
And, grander than my thought's most rich surmise,
I see light everywhere.

The gloom that clips the lessening world around
Bursts into flame and flower;
The voicelessness that girds the realm of sound
Leaps into music's shower.

The throng of greater souls who went before
Shine white as stainless snow,
And fill wide spaces past the luminous door
Of sweet Death's pangless woe.

The silences our sad hearts feared to pierce
Ring with a wondrous song,
And joy that holds at bay our anguish fierce
Makes our rapt souls more strong.

There with his peers he reaches home at last,
Knows that his work is good,
His arduous toils and journeyings overpast,
Out of the storm-swept wood.

We also touch the peacefulness benign
That calms his risen soul;
Not night, but glory, splendid and divine,
Is Death's most certain goal.

Like stars that fade into the light of day
Our vanished ones are sped,
Treading a golden and a flower-lit way
Where Death alone is dead.

THE GOSPEL OF LIMITATION

A Review of the Poetry of George Eliot.

IT has been somewhat the fashion to deny George Eliot the honor and credit of the name of poet. She has not had, the critics said, the dream and the consecration. She has not been admitted into that ideal realm where the poet sees his characters, penetrates their secrets, feels with them the agonies and ecstasies, and then, descending to earth, remembers and transcribes for a listening world. She has been accused of the terribe vice of construction. She has not seen her men and women whole, has not heard the warm words falling from the warm lips, but has taken various elements of character and experience which have interested her, and put them together in a simulacrum which has had no more life than Hawthorne's *Feathertop*. The amenities of critical expression have been stretched to the breaking point in the dissemination of these views, and in some cases have passed beyond the limits of possible utterance. The parliamentarian knows when he has exceeded the bounds of admissible speech; for the critic apparently no ethical moderation exists; in the passion for truth he may call names, impute motives, enter the privacies, indulge in the epithet extreme.

Nevertheless there has been general recognition of the poetical quality of George Eliot's prose. The proem to *Romola* is a conspicuous instance. The flight of the angel of the dawn is a convenient device, the typical Florentine makes a com-

plete survey of the world as it was constituted at the time of the ambitious story, and the alternations of dark and light, the rising into view of the realized community, the historic insight giving life and significance to varying forms of human progress and development, have in them unquestionable possibilities of what is ordinarily called poetry. If the whole is distinctly kept within certain evident limitations, if the description is given not with Parnassian but with pedestrian splendor and enterprise, the reason for these reductions into the gray and softly luminous can be found in the determination of the author not to allow full rein to her imagination, seeing it was a prose romance that she was engaged in composing. The poetry, however, was just a short excursion beyond. A more strenuous uplift of the pinions, a fuller abandonment to the creative impulse, would have attained the heights where the expression would have become rythmic by the inherent necessity of the endeavor. At least so it seems to those of us who reverence the work and genius of the great writer.

It is now clear that George Eliot was of the same opinion in regard to the general potentialities of her achievement. Her literary career has few elements of immaturity in it. She has passed the flush and heyday of youth when the *Scenes from Clerical Life* made her readers wonder whether the master pseudonym did not conceal the ardors and inconsistencies of a woman's heart. To be sure in all this George Sand had preceded her; no doubt in both cases it was a distinct challenge to recognition in the high plane of equality as well as a proud assurance that the questions to be discussed, the problem to be presented for solution, and the scenes and characters to be dealt with were as lofty and as important as

the art had ever undertaken. The great French woman was satisfied with the medium which she had originally chosen, and to which she was able to give, as John Stuart Mill, not prone to sentiment or exaggeration, says, the music and the suggestiveness of a composition by Beethoven. The English master of prose in many places found her feelings and intention ready to break through the prosaic confinement, and at length yielded to the overpowering temptation, and set forth on a voyage beset with many and serious perils. Did she reach the haven? Is the verse to be considered in the same category as the prose? Are its flights mechanical, or do they have the true spirit of levitation?

I begin with some extracts from the *Spanish Gypsy*. Had this book received the sympathetic response which its author hoped for the great intention, it is by no means improbable that other equally courageous adventures in the regions of the drama would have followed. As the reception of the book was rather coldly courteous, the fastidiously sensitive writer was unwilling to hazard another possible failure. I quote the opening lines of the *Spanish Gypsy*, which are memorable and unforgettable.

" 'Tis the warm south, where Europe spreads her lands
Like fretted leaflets, breathing on the deep;
Broad-breasted Spain, leaning with equal love
On the Mid-Sea that moans with memories
And on the untraveled Ocean's restless tides.
This river, shadowed by the battlements
And gleaming silvery towards the northern sky,
Feeds the famed stream that waters Andalus
And loiters, amorous of the fragrant air,
By Cordova and Seville to the bay,
Fronting Algarva and the wandering flood of Caudiana."

Here is a description of Fedalma, the unfortunate heroine of the poem, which has in it swiftness and light:

"Sudden with gliding motion like a flame
That through dim vapor makes a path of glory,
A figure lithe, all white and saffron robed,
Flashed right across the circle, and now stood
With ripened arms uplift and regal head,
Like some tall flower whose dark and intense heart
Lies half within a tulip-tinted cup."

The keynote of the work, which like *Daniel Deronda* deals with the subject of race and race-prejudice, is struck in these sonorous and impassioned lines falling from the lips of the Prior-Inquisitor, who reappears at the crucial moment of the play:

"I read a record deeper than the skin.
What! Shall the trick of nostrils and of lips
Descend through generations, and the soul
That moves within our frame like God in worlds —
Convulsing, urging, melting, withering —
Imprint no record, leave no documents,
Of her great history? Shall men bequeath
The fancies of their palates to their sons,
And shall the shudder of restraining awe,
The slow wept tears of contrite memory,
Faith's prayerful labor, and the food divine
Of fasts ecstatic — shall these pass away
Like wind upon the waters, tracklessly?

The courage to do great things springs into activity with the firm expression of high faith in lines like the following:

"The time is great.
(What times are little? To the sentinel
The hour is regal when he mounts on guard.)

Below is an utterance taken from the lips of the Hebrew seer and astrologer, Sephardo, surely one of the most successfully realized figures in the drama:

> "The Unnameable made not the search for truth
> To suit hidalgo's temper. I abide
> By that wise spirit of listening reverence
> Which marks the boldest doctors of our race.
> For truth, to us, is like a living child
> Born of two parents; if the parents part
> And will divide the child, how shall it live?
> Or, I will rather say: Two angels guide
> The path of man, both aged and yet young,
> As angels are, ripening through endless years.
> On one he leans; some call her Memory
> And some Tradition; and her voice is sweet
> With deep mysterious accords; the other
> Floating above, holds down a lamp which streams
> A light divine and searching on the earth,
> Compelling eyes and footsteps. Memory yields
> Yet clings with loving cheek, and shines anew
> Reflecting all the rays of that bright lamp
> Our angel Reason holds. We had not walked
> But for Tradition; we walk forevermore
> To higher paths, by brightening Reason's lamp."

The position is a favorite one with George Eliot. It is an attempt to find satisfaction with the intolerable intellectual atmosphere in which she elected to live, but the effort involves inconsistencies as irreconcilable as the larger views, according to her interpretations, from which her later life was unhappily estranged. However, I am anticipating, and must proceed with my excerpts. The lyric poignancy of emotion and the inevitable expression have been mentioned as among

the gifts to which she has no rightful claim. Let us consider these stanzas:

> "The world is great; the birds all fly from me,
> The stars are golden fruit upon a tree
> All out of reach; my little sister went,
> And I am lonely.
>
> ———
>
> The world is great; the wind comes rushing by,
> I wonder where it comes from; the sea birds cry
> And burst my heart; my little sister went,
> And I am lonely."

The specimens given above are all from the *Spanish Gypsy;* they cover a large field, description, historic insight, earthly wisdom, aspiration, destiny, grief, consolation; they are felicitous in expression, and set to a rich and solemn music. I believe that placed side by side with the work of modern poets they will stand the test, and emerge as poetry. Similar passages can be found in the other poems, notably in the *Legend of Jubal,* and in a *College Breakfast Party* and in a *Minor Prophet,* where George Eliot comes dangerously near to a confession of faith, which she persistently forces herself to withhold. In estimating her aright we shall make serious mistake if we leave out of consideration the prophetic and millennial aspects of Savonarola and Dinah Morris and Mordecai and Sephardo and Elias Baptist Butterworth and the vision of Hamlet in a *College Breakfast Party.*

> "And then he dreamed a dream so luminous
> He woke, he says, convinced; but what it taught
> Withholds as yet. Perhaps these graver shades
> Admonished him that visions told in haste
> Part with their virtues to the squandering lips
> And leave the soul in wider emptiness."

It may perhaps be thought a work of supererogation to present extracts in this way, and to draw conclusions from them. Has not all this work been done, and should one not accept the results already achieved, and pass beyond them? Such is unquestionably the right course, unless one finds it necessary to contravene the generally accepted point of view, and make a reconstitution of the conventional opinion. Criticism too often is satisfied with the definite formulations which have grown up about a subject, and constant repetitions are made of what has come to be regarded as the orthodox understanding or appreciation of a matter or person, until a thicket of misapprehension may have arisen which seriously calls for removal and extirpation. Doubtless it is impossible forever to go back to the original and virgin assumptions, but there is no harm in doing so sometimes, and strengthening the accepted presentation by a novel proof, or modifying it by the introduction of elements strangely overlooked, or upsetting it entirely if it rests on impossible foundations.

In the present instance the passages quoted, which could be multiplied indefinitely, are expected to show that George Eliot had a mastery of poetical form not unlike that which she had of the customary vehicle which she used in her novels, that she was fully justified in giving way to her propensity for verse, and that her success was such as to give assurance that she would have won a foremost place, had she devoted herself exclusively to poetry. Who could doubt it, when listening to such music as this?

> "The sun had sunk, but music still was there,
> And when this ceased, still triumph filled the air;
> It seemed the stars were shining with delight

And that no night was ever like this night.
All clung with praise to Jubal; some besought
That he would teach them his new skill; some caught
Swiftly as smiles are caught in looks that meet,
The tone's melodic change and rythmic beat,
'Twas easy following where invention trod —
All eyes can see when light flows out from God."

If one makes an examination of plot and construction, one will not find the poems any less consummate, any less successfully contrived, any less brilliant in climax or conclusion than the novels. Indeed the similarity of procedure in *Romola* and the *Spanish Gypsy* is on the surface, and forces itself at once on a regard that does not need to be subtle or profound. There is the same elaborate orientation into the historic temper and atmosphere, there is the same minute painting of the background by the introduction of all sorts of characters, high and low, there is the same play of humor about eventualities whose sole purpose is to make us acquainted with the life of a civility alien to us both in place and time. Blasco, Hinda, Juan, Roldan, Annibal, Pepita, play their light and evanescent parts in the Spanish drama purely to the end that we may envisage the land and the loves and the labors of a people subject to warmer suns and more primitive conditions than our own. Treachery stalks in the background, and the women, Fedalma and her Italian sister, are irremediably caught in a complex of circumstances which shatters all their intentions and offers them up as sacrifices on the altars of masculine purposes which had not the strength to win unmixed worship from their clear-eyed intelligence. The conduct of the play is as legitimately devised, is as full of alternations of humor and intensity, reaches

as high and moving a culmination, relapses into as deep a final serenity as the novel. They both have George Eliot's noble characteristics, they both have the defects of her qualities, and altogether in the same way.

When I now turn to the *Legend of Jubal,* my conclusions are strengthened and enlarged, for here the mastery of the rhymed pentametric couplet is complete. One will have to go back to Chaucer to find an equal freedom, and delicate yielding to the varied sentiments to be expressed, one will have to go back to Pope to find the pungent and epigrammatic distinction which he cultivated with such success, one will have to go to Dryden to discover the virile largeness and directness of the viewpoint. George Eliot never recovered from her fondness for the stories of the Bible which she imbibed in her early evangelical days (witness the fine poem, *The Death of Moses,* as well as the *Legend of Jubal*), a fondness for which she made mistaken expiation by translations from the extremely radical utterances of Strauss and Feuerbach. Whether she ever brought herself wholly to believe in the latter's dictum, *"Der Mensch its was er isst,"* may be questioned. There certainly remained haunting and disquieting dubitations as the later pages of this paper will endeavor to show. She had entered, however, into a strange and cabalistic circle whose high priests were the limitationists, Spencer and Harrison and Lewes and the lesser satellites, and the ardors of her more erected spirit were wing-clipped by these purveyors of magic, for evidently the magical or sorcerer's point of view in the needed explanation of the world is always the one which makes the attempt, ineffectual forever, to contain the free spiritual enlightenment in impossible sensuous measures or to thrust it out of sight

in a hypothetical limbo of some vague sort or other. The old adage says, you may expel nature with a fork, but she is sure to come running back; much more is it the case if you thrust out of door the legitimated aspirations of mankind, substituting for them whatever indifferent equilibrium of inner and outer denominated happiness; these will assault the frail erections of an artificial and unsatisfactory paradise and batter them down over the heads of the mystified dwellers there. So was it with George Eliot, as I shall expect to prove farther on. In the poem of *Jubal* the grandiose partiarchal life is envisaged with remarkable breadth and vigor, the beginnings of civilization in colossal measures are reproduced with singular skill and effectiveness, the awakening of the wider intelligence and interpretative power which make the artistic impulse and achievement is presented with contagious enthusiasm, and the tragic conclusion is full of pathos and mystery. The technical construction of the poem is masterly, and George Eliot may demand recognition as a poet on the ground of this poem alone; but the others are like it, and add to the cogency of the claim. I shall not enter upon a wearisome repetition or analysis, brief or long, bringing in the remaining pieces, but one needs only to read a *Minor Prophet* with its singular admissions and statements, considering the central insight to which she steadily adhered during the productive period of her life, or to listen to the undercurrent of music in a *College Breakfast Party,* to find assurance brought to the inevitable conclusion that she had a right to regard herself as gifted with the winged speech and the attribute of song.

The charge is further pronounced against her that her song lacks spontaneity and is capable only of slow and some-

what wearisome flights. The same charge can be brought against the novels. This may be no satisfactory defense, but the poet of a complex and questioning age, or the writer of fiction of an elaborate and scientific period, has the difficulty to meet and to overcome. The contemporaries of George Eliot were in the same dilemma. Tennyson, sounding the heights and depths of the Evolutionary Theory as he found it narrowed on English soil, made of the *In Memoriam* an elegy, perhaps the most impressive that we possess, but hardly a light effusion of the Muse to speed the passage of a summer afternoon under the trees. Robert Browning's vehement assertions of the sufficiency and fundamentality of the spiritual life, permeated by a wide acquaintance with many literatures and recondite learning of all sorts, paid for his persistence and devotion by listening patiently to accusations of premeditated obscurity, and waiting long for the sure but slow-coming recognition. The novels of George Meredith, dominated by a brilliant over-idiosyncrasy of style and expressing a saddening negative doctrine of life, supposedly disillusionizing and strengthening but substituting very little by way of reconstruction, have never been easy reading by the winter fireside, and in the days to come will furnish considerable material for the annotater and defender. It was Dickens and Thackeray, bringing the old positive message of faith in the general goodness of the universe, who escaped the severity of the task imposed on the litterateurs, and reached the clarity which insures acknowledgment and permanence. George Eliot is in the same category with her co-workers and compeers. The *Spanish Gpysy* is as light reading as *Ferishtah's Fancies* or the *Egoist* or *Sartor Resartus* or the noble tribute to young Hallam or the *Song of the*

Broad Axe by Walt Whitman. This leads me to my next point. What reply have these poems to make to the great questions which were agitating the mind of the time, and which were clearly present in the thought of George Eliot as appears constantly in her utterances, varied in kind and degree? What relation do her poems bear to her other writings, both translations and novels, her acknowledged and authentic contribution to the literature of the age? Perhaps in the answer to these interrogations we shall find the reason for the unquestionable dissent from her acceptance as a lyric interpreter, although many who have made the assertion most strongly had as little right to unanimous acceptance as she had. Surely Swinburne with his negative pantheism, his individualistic narrowness of appreciation of truth, and his general vagueness of conception, had small foundation for the unmannerly assaults which he makes upon a talent founded and established in as genuine a devotion and as assiduous an industry as his own labors can show. Mr. Browning is the proper antithesis to George Eliot, the poetry of the inspired vision of truth, not a whit less free and learned, showing brilliant against the difficult wanderings in the sphere of factitious and seemingly insuperable limitations.

Into this sphere of limitations George Eliot entered with the coming of her enlightenment and emancipation from the galling bondages of evangelical religion. The enlightenment was indeed dominating all England, and the future creator of Tito Melema and Dorothea Brooke proceeded into its most sacred precincts. She voluntarily placed herself in an imprisonment from which her ardent spirit sought relief without avail. She beat her wings ineffectually against the walls which she had herself erected, and which it ought to

have been clear that she could overthrow as readily as she had called them into being. Thought assuredly makes or remakes all the limits which it finds, and its history has been the constant obliteration of barriers which have been demonstrated to be ultimate. Being itself the universal the particular shows itself in last analysis as only an element in its progress and culmination. George Eliot found herself on her arrival in London in close association with the foremost apostles of the limited and relative. There was Herbert Spencer, who without any first-hand knowledge of Emanuel Kant — he was obliged to use citations from the *Critique of Pure Reason* translated for him by a friend — made extensive use of Kant's *Thing-in-Itself* under the name of the *Unknowable*. Both thinkers posited an unattainable realm outside of the attainable, and whatever idealities most vehemently solicited the reverence of the race were thrust unto that " intense inane " out of sight or hearing or appreciation. Kant wrote a Palinode in his *Practical Reason,* but the English thinker remained satisfied with the narrow circle in which he was willing to be " cabined, cribbed and confined." There was George Henry Lewes, who assisted at a moral misadventure, from which he should have recoiled, and who made a distinction in his interminably spun out *Problems of Life and Mind* between the empirical and metempirical, the latter containing such unimportant ideas as God, Freedom, and Immortality, which were thus placed beyond the possible ken of humanity, and were the merest shadowy delusions, whose persistent presence nevertheless in the human intelligence furnished a problem passing the ingenuity of the most skillful thaumaturgist among the apostles of the limited. Thus was established another strict confinement

within which the mind was to move, subject to constant irruptions from a mysterious without, and remaining passive to these endless assaults, save for a wholly (on the theory) inexplicable tendency to put disturbances of the peace into some sort of temporary order. The catalogue of the limitationists can, of course, be indefinitely extended; there was Frederic Harrison, the genial essayist, who sold himself to the Comtist propaganda without receiving a commensurate return; Harriet Martineau, who in her place and order produced a replica of George Eliot's experiences; there was John Stuart Mill, whose irrational heart transcended the rigidly narrow exclusions of his understanding; there was Dean Mansel, who presented a truncated formulation of Kant's *Transcendental Dialectic* without a trace of vision as to whither that doctrine was leading. Into this charmed circle the great woman came, she was induced to make her home there, she adopted the language and methods, she endeavored to subdue her creative activity into its usages and formalities, not, however, without considerable difficulty and reluctation as her writings everywhere show.

The doctrine of limits permits to no subject the development which properly belongs to it; perforce it effects the Procrustean decapitation, which the theory necessitates, and the inherent unfolding of a subject, which presupposes universality for successful operation, is consistently ignored. The most pronounced limitationists have admitted much into their systems which had no real right there. Even David Hume wrote a *Natural History of Religions,* not published till after his death, in which he makes admissions contradicting his fundamental principles; Professor Clifford indulges in a sentimental description of the day when the sun arose

on a world from which God had departed, every syllable of which implies the deity who like Emerson's *Brahma* pronounces with complacency his exclusion from his own universe; the same writer shows great familiarity with a mind-stuff out of which everything is made, and Tyndall posits a material, whose potentiality is consciousness and thought and ultimate explanation of itself; but George Eliot, with the thoroughness which was an integral part of her nature and character, made the futile effort to live and move and have her being within the described periphery. This was indeed the Duty which is made both in the novels and poems so solemn and earnest an affair, and which is urged so persistently as the substitute, ennobling and consoling, for so much which essays to overleap the barriers. The altruism which finds such eloquent expression in the lyric, " Oh, may I join the choir invisible " labors under the fatal defect that it can furnish no substantial excuse for its being. Since it is essentially the effort of the impermanent and evanescent, since those for whom the sacrifice is made are as fleeting as those who gave up all for them, there is left but the empty form of the advancing social organization to worship and adore. Mankind will find it hard to burn incense before so shadowy and unappealing an altar. The great Positivist in his latter years found it necessary to substitute for his abstraction a church and a creed which his disciples were loth to adopt.

In the *Spanish Gypsy* as in *Daniel Deronda* the subject of race-prejudice is brought under consideration. The matter is again discussed in its more immediate aspects in the essays by *Theophrastus Such*. The latter gentleman is rather prosy, and langour and weariness are apparent in his

prolusions as if the twilight were falling and the day were nearing its close. The outcome of the *Spanish Gypsy* is a heart-breaking tragedy:

> "It was night
> Before the ships weighed anchor and set sail;
> Fresh night emergent in her clearness, lit
> By the large crescent moon, with Hesperus,
> And those great stars that lead the eager host,
> Fedalma stood and watched the little bark
> Lying jet-black upon moon-whitened waves.
> Silva was standing too. He too divined
> A steadfast form that held him with its thought,
> And eyes that sought him vanishing; he saw
> The waters widen slowly, till at last
> Straining he gazed, and knew not if he gazed
> On aught but blackness overhung by stars."

The race-barrier rises between the Spanish Cavalier and the Gypsy; the antagonism is emphasized by the introduction of the religious element; the hero is fighting the battle of the civilization threatened by a last assault of the decadent barbarism; the triumph of his nobler objectified ideal is certain and at hand; the fierce passion of the free but uncouth Gypsy life beats after all with innocuous foam against the citadels of the established faith; the heroine has been reared into the usages and beliefs of the dominant religion and polity; she is related to the barbarism which claims her only by the external fetters of birth and race and ancestry; in the free development of her own spirit she hardly touches her physical antecedents by the tip of a wing or finger; is there in all this the making of a tragic collision? George Eliot states in one of her letters, written in explanation of the poem, that tragedy consists in the futile uprising of the particular against the

general. One asks immediately, where is the general to be found, with Zarca or with Silva? The answer can be given without much difficulty. The spectre of race intervenes, and race with its traditions, its memories, its impositions, its prejudices, is made an insuperable bar. The limit is set and rigidly maintained. The Gypsy cannot enter into genuine alliance with the Spaniard; the death of Zarca, motived by the ignominious condemnation of the fanatical Prior Inquisitor, is the symbol of the irreconcilable dissidence; a woman can hardly be expected to marry the murderer of her father. The two races are opposed, one general against another; yet the Spanish ideal is distinctly the higher; it would seem that solution could have been found in the principle of subordination. We are left in the presence of a limit, apparently accepted as final, with all its hideous implications of perpetrated injustices and possible darkening of the future. When the same subject is taken up on a different plane in *Daniel Deronda,* the end seems as little satisfactory as in the *Spanish Gypsy*. The recognition of race as an historical moment in the development of the solidarity of mankind, which the intelligence sees as a limit which it can overcome by making use of it, does not appear in the poem. The limit thus rigidified appalls the reader, makes him demur at the presentation, and in the one case, in spite of the noble and evident poetry, forces him to reject the drama as a real work of genius, and in the other to call the novel a less successful production of the writer's extraordinary talent. The limitary determination, the finite, is not congenial with poetry; this last in every adequate definition of it deals with the infinite, with the free spirit of man.

When we take up the *Legend of Jubal,* we are con-

fronted by the same dilemma in a somewhat different form. Nevertheless, at bottom, this trouble is wholly like the former one. The great inventor of the lyre, the discoverer of the supreme world of music, which is the quintessence of the chaotic environment of sound, who hears in a bird-note, in the clash of metals, in the soughing of trees, in the variant modulations of the human voice, the possibility of such a re-creation that the prehistoric travail, the toil, the agony, the triumph of the mighty uplift, will be reflected in the present melody and combination, the giver to his kind of an achievement more precious than even his harmonies can express, Jubal, the fashioner of music, wanders away from his home, satiated with love and adulation, and freighted at last with multifarious experiences returns to find his name the symbol of all excellence, his memory adorned like a god's, but himself old, haggard, wearied, thrust forth in utter unrecognition when at a festival in his honor he announces himself. He dies, and the spirit of his past addressed him:

> "This was thy lot to feel, create, bestow,
> And that immeasurable life to know
> From which the fleshly self parts, shriveled, dead,
> A reed primeval that has forests bred.
>
> ———
>
> The gift to give was thine of men alone;
> 'Twas but in giving that thou couldst atone
> For too much wealth, amid their poverty."
>
> "He heard more faintly and more faintly knew,
> Quitting mortality, a quenched Sun-wave,
> The all creating Presence for his grave."

The life, thrust back into the past as a whole, a combination of necessity limited and terminated, is a sufficient accomplish-

ment; the effort to spread activity, beneficent and pure of self-seeking, in other words to make activity infinite, again appears as the Medusa-like horror from which one must shrink lest one be petrified. The contradiction of the all creating Presence, which is surely not the Unknowable, although it is posited here as unsubjected to the laws of thinking prevalent in the sphere where are breath and sight and hearing and consciousness, is a marvelous superposition on a poem like the present one. Why an activity freed from every vestige of selfish aggrandizement, given up always to self-sacrifice and benefaction, the very embodiment of the duty that is writ large through all these pages, should be estopped in mid-career at its height and perfection to give way to others less fully equipped for service, is a difficulty with which the adherents of relativity have labored with indifferent success, and George Eliot, I am sure, only succumbed after bitter struggle and with lasting hesitation.

The poem *A Minor Prophet* has not received the attention which it deserves. It is really one of George Eliot's most significant utterances. Its hero, an American, Elias Baptist Butterworth — the name has all sorts of connotations — is a vegetarian, who believes that the millenium is sure to come when he has converted man to practical acceptance of his theories. Butterworth preaches his doctrine passionately in and out of season, and religiously adheres to it himself. He is one of those seers delineated by their creator with such earnestness and intensity that one wonders how far the interest manifested in them means an acceptance of their fervor and foresight. Dinah Morris, the incarnation of youth's beliefs and prophetic imaginings, Savonarola, the fierce arraigner of the present realizations and the intense determina-

tor of a kingdom on earth like the heavenly one, Sephardo, the possessor of a cosmic learning and liberality at an important crisis in historic progress and mutation, Mordecai, the pathetic upholder of an undefeated cause, forever resurrected from every burial in whatsoever noisome tomb, beholding the illustrious triumph which is sure to come, be it soon or late, Elias Baptist Butterworth, uncouth descendent of a narrow-minded Cromwellian, Puritanic ancestry, having the beatific vision of a perfected social organization, unspotted from the tragic violence which is scientifically and in a way euphemistically denominated the struggle of existence and the survival of the fittest, these are singular and disquieting figures in the world of George Eliot. Somehow they do not quite fit into the framework; they are indeed with all their faults and failures consistent avatars of the duty and altruism so somberly and persistently presented in these many pages, but the faith which burns in them, the energy which ennobles them, overleap the barriers of the realm in which they enact their parts, and threaten at all times to bring that realm to nought, building upon its ruins another one, less artfully constructed and assured of more genuine permanence. The comment in the poem on Elias Baptist Butterworth is written in its author's highest strain, with an abandon, a force, an uplift, that gives it a place quite its own, and while the attempt is made to minimize the vision by making it again an outgrowth from the past, that fatal, doom-bringing, forever encircling past, yet there are exultant lines which exceed the limits of time and space, and emerge from the regions of spontanous assurance and freedom:

> "Yet no! the earth yields nothing more divine
> Than high prophetic vision — than the seer

Who fasting from man's meaner joy beholds
The paths of beauteous order, and constructs
A fairer type to shame our low content."

With the *Minor Prophet* is to be coupled the *Stradivarius,* another outbreak from the profounder depths, and another bursting through the filmy enchantment into which man's life has been determined like that of Goethe's homunculus in his transparent bottle.

The *College Breakfast Party* is a remarkable imaginative *tour de force.* It again illustrates George Eliot's catholicity of conception, and is written with a buoyancy which indicates that the author is thoroughly at home, and rejoices in the freedom which home above all else means to one who has been subjected to conventions and formalities burdensome and enervating in the extreme. The horrible metempiric realm comes rushing all around us, and the theory of the relative receives a crushing and mortal stab at the hands of that one of the members of the Breakfast Party from whom it is least expected, the truculent and omnidestroyer Rosencratz. Whether the notable five who made a morning with Horatio, the taciturn and the hospitable, are representatives of actual persons, whom George Eliot met at her memorable visits to Oxford, whether this is a transcript of a conversation actually held in the grave and reverend city, are questions which may be left to those who find the chief interest in great people in making visits to the haunts which they frequented and in listening to gossip about them from neighbors who found them wholly unintelligible while they pursued their unaccountable ways under the glimpses of the moon. Nevertheless here are five well-defined persons, engaged in a discussion of the ethical problem, after a morning meal in the

rooms of Horatio, who in the character of host maintains a discreet silence, and gives free play to the brilliant fencing of his guests. The polished priest for whom the gathering has been made gives a consummate statement of the view, that all efforts at solution of the riddle of conduct must lead into an inevitable cul-de-sac, because the solution is pre-eminently transcendental and refuses mundane mensurations; the invitation of a supernatural authority soliciting obedience and assuring deliverance can alone furnish the mediation into the ultimate peace and spirituality. He retires before any discussion of his position begins, for the position as he puts it admits of no discussion. The abstract aesthetic view, the complete negation of all possibility of solution with suicide as the outlet, the subjective need and discovery of a primary principle, the objective strength of pressure and direction in the way of constantly enlarging realizations, the ardent discipleship of youth eager to find justification for vivid and limitless hopefulness, battle back and forth with apparent earnestnes and sincerity. There is no leading up to a synthesis, at the close we are left as we were at the beginning, subject to a variety of assailments, and the irony of the presentation complete. The easy William James path out of the wilderness, believe as you will and build up your universe on that basis, does not seem to have occurred to the novelist; such solution was doubtless left to a later and higher and more democratic phase of speculation; the whole looks like a demonstration of the utter limitedness of the total human intelligence, although one becomes conscious of an undercurrent in the movement and connection as of some higher ideality, which at last appears in a luminous dream to Hamlet, the believer and doubter of many things, indeed,

but at the same time the apprehensive youth, who embodies the to-come, and who refuses to divulge the revelation. Is it perchance another revulsion and protest? Another disinclination to accept the relative? Another surreptitious gaze at the regal landscape stretching in undescribed splendor around and outside of the limited parkland wherein the denier of the metempiric uneasily dwells?

The parallelisms between the novels and the poems are many and remarkable. For every poem a corresponding treatment in prose can be found. The devotion of Romola to her scholar father is matched by the acquiescences of Fedalma in the purposes of Zarca, notwithstanding the sore trouble of total inability of full understanding and sympathy. The mother of Daniel Deronda with her fierce upbraidings at a fate which debarred her from her artistic career finds an equally fervid analogue in Armgart. The satisfaction which Agatha displays in her narrow and uninspiring surroundings recalls the simple folk treated in so many ways in the stories of the so-called provinces. The *Brother and Sister* sonnet sequence inevitably brings the *Mill on the Floss* to mind. Jubal and Klesmer, Don Silva and Deronda, Lisa and Mirah, can readily be bracketed for reasons inherent in their experiences and characteristics. Of the fiery-hearted seers I have already spoken; the minor personages are not unlike their congeners in the regions of prose. Indeed, the relatively small volume of poems contains the essentials of George Eliot's deliverances; the novels enlarge the canvas, introduce a multitude of figures, deepen the analysis and the impression, but the burden is similar, the utterance is of the same texture and import. This is not intended as a depreciation, it only states the fact of the author having made, as I think, success-

ful adventures, profound and excellent, in the dual medium of prose and poetry, an achievement well worth high consideration. The duality which has become apparent in the poems will be found with equal intensity in the novels. These are characters which have reached no culminating serenity, destinies which are insoluble enigmas, collisions in which the spirit sinks past all possibility of extrication. The poems are as good as the novels, and, if the author attains the merit of fame in the one, she has as perfect a claim to it in the other, and the crown she wears of right should be a double circle. We are in the realm of persistent illusion, and the somber claims of duty find but a dull echo in our hearts. The limitary consciousness can be only a painful one unless a term can be found for the struggle, and the anguish shows itself as a stepping stone towards the attainment of a peace transcendent and ennobling. The walls of the prison house must be seen to be no insuperable barriers, but a temporary retardation to be succeeded by enfranchisement and a sturdier advance. The works of the great and gifted woman are, after all, heroic efforts at emancipation from the bondages self-imposed, and the freedom was often attained. With the release of death came assuredly the idealizing revelation, and the entrance into genuine personal immortality meant the resurgence of the absolute knowing, which had been her appanage in youth, which she inconsistently was forced to express more than once in her maturer years and which is the light of all her seeing, and which is the light of all seeing that brings the beneficent universality home to us, personal as she knew it in *Daniel Deronda,* infinitely responsive to every appeal, and infinitely efficacious to every elevation and completion.

THE DRAMATIC SENTIMENT AND TENNYSON'S PLAYS.

THE dramatic sentiment like every other has unfolded and become enriched with the passage of the ages and the process of the suns. It is a little singular, however, that the representation of a condition of things in the ordinary mind usually lags considerably behind the realization which is vigorously active in the world. Perhaps this is inevitable; explanation usually reproduces with a good deal of inaccuracy the fact to be explained; although the highest explanation, which is far more than the fact, is always with us, often obscure and contemned, but surely leading onwards and upwards.

Most critics of to-day seem still to regard dramatic as synonymous with the violent, the extravagant, the extraordinary. It is quite clear to them that a drama is impossible without a collision, or opposition of interests or principles, and they still appear to believe that this conflict must be a furious one, with fierce antagonisms, more or less declamatory utterances, something like the clash of knightly armor and weapons, and death at the end yet further to solemnize the scene.

The novel which occupies so large a share of the present attention of readers is permitted to divest itself of plot or unusual incident, and show forth the interaction or oppugnancy of purely spiritual elements. The outer investiture is of very small account; the main interest arises from the description

of mental conditions, and the inevitable results emerging from their development and coalescence or hostility.

The Story of David Grieve might be transferred to this country without any detriment to the soul processes which it so elaborately portrays, and the whole movement of the narrative might change its local habitation and color without depriving the delineation of any of its value or impressiveness. The fact that Grieve was an Englishman, and that the crucial segment of his experiences proceeded in France, is extraneous to the picture, and might be altered without interfering with its brilliancy or depth of meaning.

The drama, however, according to the critics, has achieved no such independency. It must occupy itself with a life of which combat and vituperation and wild indignation form essential parts, or, if it deal with more recent affairs, it must have hosts of incidents succeeding with unnatural rapidity upon the heels of each other, and bring in various supposably interesting features, which are too rare amid daily occurrences to be called justly a part of them. The writers of dramas produce work after work in complete contradiction to the theories of the professional critics, but that has not the smallest effect in changing or modifying their opinions. These writings are condemned off-hand, and when they are found to be the permanent additions to the world's literature, they are denominated anomalies, which justify their tenacity of existence by certain admirable aspects, which they present in common with productions fashioned more in accord with the conventional canons.

In this way it has been conclusively demonstrated that the dramatic works of Tennyson belong to the least satisfactory portion of his work, and that they are the fruits of a period

of decadence, when the lassitude of assured success had taken full possession of him, and when the merely professional facility induced by years of unremitting labor led him to attempt what by nature he was poorly fitted for. The wonderful strength and manliness of the *Becket* might, perhaps, have aroused some suspicion of the necessity for a re-examination of these conclusions, but the established critic could but ill bear the imputation put upon his assumed infallibility by a generous admission that for once he has been mistaken.

The drama of to-day is not exactly what is was in the days of Shakespeare, and, if, on the one hand, it places less stress upon a bustling and vehement action, it has, on the other, some distinct claims to an advance and a superiority. The first part of Goethe's *Faust* has a depth and homelikeness of pathos, a vivid reproduction of spiritual conditions and struggles, which the Elizabethan drama did not perhaps essay, except in that wholy unique and incomparable performance, the play of *Hamlet*. In that tragedy the renaissance has been wholly transcended, and the modern world appears before it has fairly stepped on the vast stage of action.

In a Greek play the moment of the action is seized which is its real center, and which in a few intense and highly wrought scenes indicates all necessary antecedents, and leads at once to the catastrophe. The three unities of place, time, and action belong to it of necessity. In the *Prometheus* we learn very briefly that the Titan has defied the omnipotence of Zeus; we see Force and Violence nailing him to the herbless summit of Mount Caucasus; we behold his indomitable resistance, and find him defying Mercury, the messenger of

Zeus, and remaining unshaken by the storm which is poured forth upon his shelterless head. We hear the sympathetic maunderings of Oceanus, the plaints of the Chorus of Sea-divinities, and querulous bitterness of the wandering Io. The defiance of Zeus, in spite of its apparent hopelessness, constitutes the whole delineation. There is but the single heroic figure, the shadowy weakness of the wailing ones around him; the actual time of the events, had they really occurred, could not have been longer than the time of the performance. There is one overwhelming intensity of effect. The characters are majestic, the action rapid, but the introspective tendencies of modern times are conspicuous by their absence, and even in *Euripides,* who was content to deal with the human rather than the mystical and divine, and with whom the romantic emerges distinctly enough, the simplicity of the action and the sculpturesque splendor of the figures are paramount considerations.

With the spread of Christianity very different notions supervened. The natural life, whose beauty and completeness had been so much to the Greek, began to be considered a heritage of the misfortunes which had befallen our remote ancestors. To suppress the body and its desires became a most important endeavor, and to sit on the top of a pillar, subject to the influences of the weather, and begirt with all the squalor which such a situation implies, was a worthy thing to do so long as one was visited by heavenly visions, and alive to the dimly-heard harmonies sounding from the inner skies. Says St. Simeon Stylites in Tennyson's poem:

> "I, 'tween the opening and downfall of the light,
> Bow down one thousand and two hundred times
> To Christ, the Virgin Mother, and the Saints;

Or in the night, after a little sleep,
I wake; the chill stars sparkle; I am wet
With drenching dews, or stiff with crackling frost.
I wear an undressed goatskin on my back;
A grazing iron collar grinds my neck;
And in my weak, lean arms I left the cross,
And strive and wrestle with thee till I die;
O mercy, mercy! Wash away my sins."

The exterior ugliness of the saint is redeemed through an inner splendor by the side of which the light of the noonday sun is mere blackness. The whole world of the within had been opened and revealed; the spiritual heights which were to be climbed were so alluring that attentions to the concerns of the body and the daily life became a contempt and a hissing. The deserts and the mountains received the devotees, who trod under foot the savage temptations of the flesh, and saw unrolled before them at times the silver spaces of a future world, in which the saints dwelt in a mystery of bliss and glory. Such an abstraction could only in its extreme affect a small portion of the race, and could not among them abide for very long; nevertheless the whole life was changed, and the new realm of the spirit was one into which all must enter, and whose experiences were of infinite and eternal import. But the realization of the spiritual longings was placed in a world beyond this present one, and death was the wonderful door through which men passed into a preparation for the golden life under the very throne of God, or a darkness which the grotesque imagination of the period peopled with horrors that yet haunt our own century, and are the ghosts which it is our business to exorcise, and make obedient to the needs of a luminous and advancing civiliza-

tion. The present world was, after all, only a temporary scene in which the victory was to be won, which should be crowned with fadeless happiness, or a defeat sustained which might perhaps allow of no alleviation forever. That future world gave rise to vast allegorical representations; the imagination threw itself upon it with vehemence, and built up picture after picture of the eventualities belonging to it. The great poem of Dante sums them up in one incomparable masterpiece, and he calls his poem a *Divine Comedy*. Moreover, the whole movement of the poem proceeds not in this world, but in another which is within and above this one. The crude Mysteries and Miracle Plays of which the Middle Age was so fond are of the same kind, allegories of the spirit, scenes from the Scriptures, which are made the medium of moral or religious instruction, an interior realm adumbrated in scenes whose unity lies in their belonging to one spiritual experience. The dramatic sentiment has gone a long way from the Greek clearness and simplicity; it has lost the quality of luminousness which belongs to everything Greek; it has connected itself with mysteries and splendors, which often float before it in a haze, rich with many hues and not unlike to confuse as well as charm; it has lost singleness of aim and directness of effect; but it has gained insights which are beyond all price, and it has given life a value exceeding and marvelous. It may have buried itself in other worldliness, but the significance of this world could not be adequately appreciated without seeing its dependence upon that higher one; it discovered the infinite within to which the infinite without was subordinate and tributary; it found the two realms, and attempted to relate them; no doubt the present world suffered a temporary absorption in a radiance greater than its own,

and the proper coördination of the two worlds was a task to be undertaken by later and better-equipped generations.

The Shakespearian dramatists had the great Renaissance behind them. The ancient world had been rediscovered, the ancient writings had been restudied, the ancient beauty had reasserted its undying charm. A return was made from the world of spirit in which the race had been so long dwelling, and the consciousness began to dawn that the spiritual was not exclusively to be found in an after experience, in an ethereal region above the coarser one of the life of to-day, that it was to be realized only by a maceration of the body which practically extinguished it, or by that total extinction which we call death. The spiritual life is here and now, the moral life of goodness, and gentleness, and courtesy, embodies it wherever these may be, and to live it is not only a possible achievement but an imperative necessity. Compared with Dante, therefore, Shakespeare and his companion dramatists appear wholly secular; they are occupied with the great deeds of men, the anguish of the moral struggle, the attainment of righteousness, the establishment of those institutions in which the genuine life of man is alone possible. They go very far on the way along which this progress is made. They talk magnificently of the freedom of the human spirit, and have small respect for any constituted authority which does not vindicate itself as the helper of genuine advancement. The Holy Church is sometimes treated by them with scant courtesy, and her subordination to the destinies of the nation is propounded with surprising clearness. The spiritual is seen resident in the human; the struggle of the individual toward his highest nobility here and now, the struggle of the State in the establishment of the best means for the attainment of

the goodness of all, interest them and give a new direction to the dramatic feeling. Human life as such begins to be studied; the heavens for the time recede; the earth springs again into the foreground — but great is the difference between this and the Greek — the complexity, the fullness, the interiorness, to coin a word, the bringing together of so many phases, laughter and sorrow, joy and grief, passion and travesty, all in one play which has a profound inner unity, but which defies the formal unities of time and place.

Yet one may, I think, justly say of it that it has too much to do with kings and queens, with knights and ladies, with wonderful pleasure gardens and romantic forests, with vassals and squires and dependents. Too many of the plots are exotic, they fly to Italy and Spain and Greece and fabulous woodlands like the forest of Arden, or merely imagined lands like Bohemia, which, although it is literally surrounded by mountains, in *The Winter's Tale,* has a seacoast, which is easily reached from the island of Sicily.

The modern dramatist distinctly takes the human soul in its entire extent as his province. Indeed all modern art does the same. The republican spirit, or rather the humane spirit, has taken possession of the modern consciousness. A king or a queen is a sort of anachronism, come to us from the Middle Age, and living on into a time which looks at their pretensions half contemptuously. The agonies which belong to a dairy-maid are as worthy of delineation at full length as those of Queen Victoria herself, and Hardy in his novel *Tess of the D'Urbervilles,* has taken her for his subject. The distinctively modern painter, in whose soul surged all the problems, anxieties, and hopes of to-day, confines himself during his great creative period to French peasant life. The under-

lying principle throughout is the validity of the individual soul and its infinite worth, and the soul is the summit of being in itself, and the extraneous conditions of grandeur or squalor have as little to do with its intrinsic heroism or degradation as its last year's clothes, now ready for the rag-bag. Besides, we have learned that the daily trials and the small details of living contain comedies and tragedies, which are as profound and as far reaching in their consequences as the woes of Semiramis, or the tortures of Œdipus. The conflicts with which we busy ourselves are the conflicts within, the maladjustments which arise from spiritual mistakes and longings, the joys and the miseries which are the property of the whole human family, and which are not the outgrowths of conditions factitious and external. We have learned further that the life of the universe is one life, that the deed here and now has infinite consequences and returns charged with its inevitable largeness of effect upon the doer, that Heaven and Hell and Purgatory are only continuations of this life, and their duplications are forever transpiring all around us, that the great Dantean epic needs no projection into a region beyond for its display, nor any investiture of myth and grotesque story, but that it is living and breathing and acting everywhere, that it is a wonderful picture of the eternal world, which, since it is eternal, is as much now as then. We have also learned that there are no such things as insoluble riddles, and collisions in life which admit of no reconciliation; the word of the modern world is distinctly optimistic, healing, consolatory, reconciliatory. There are no more tragedies, there are only divine comedies, which lead through the dark wood of temptation and the horror of sin and wrong-doing to the gracious Mount of Healing with its green

and singing sides, and thence into the Rose of the Blessed, which grows by every hearthstone where intelligence is alert and hearts are true.

One can readily see that art of this kind makes but little of plot and story, and rather smiles at the vehemence and uproar which the critics, who still live in the prehistoric ages of their science, persist in calling dramatic, while refusing the name to exquisite productions, in which the deepest instincts and hopes of the human soul are laid bare with a refinement and gentleness that the majority of the artists of the past entirely lacked. What has been said of the drama is equally true of the characters who appear in them. A storming and mouthing and abnormally vicious Richard the Third is in the Shakespearian drama not to be counted beside the noble wifely devotion of Hermione, or the splendid friendship of Horatio for the hapless and misunderstood prince, and the Margaret of Goethe's *Faust* reaches our hearts when the thunder and lightning of a Marlowe's *Faustus* half induces us to be amused.

This introduction leads up to a just defence of Tennyson's power as a dramatic writer. While the best of his plays are historical and deal with very stirring times, they are yet so thoroughly engaged with the interior life of the period and the men and women in them, that they have been said to be wholly lacking in those qualities which are usually denominated dramatic, which is the same as to say that they attempt, in the genuine modern manner, to unfold the real springs of action of the times which they depict, Hood and Becket and Mary, and that they have as little merely outer pomp and circumstance as goes with the plays being representations at all. *Becket* is the favorite, but it is not because it is a worthier

play than the others, but because it has a death scene in which a man, unprotected and heroic, confronts a number of fierce assassins, and in which are seen the gleam and brandishing of daggers, and in which is heard the despairing wail of an unfortunate woman, whose only friend lies bleeding and murdered before her.

Tennyson is one of the great voices of modern times. He is thoroughly penetrated with the spirit of the era, and his methods are throughout such as that spirit dictates. His plays are not so much the delineation of great deeds as they are the studies of the motives which lie behind those deeds; they are not merely the reproduction of men and women in the very guise in which they appeared when they walked the fields, or trod the streets, or loved in the forests of England, although they are as historically correct as the widest information can make them, but they are the study of a great national movement of English life, which is one chapter in the story of the emancipation of the English people from subjection to a rule, foreign in its origin, and not at all one of their own choice. The four plays which are his chief claim to recognition as a dramatic writer, and which, I think, we are already beginning to see as among his most valuable contributions to the permanent heritage of the Engish-speaking peoples, are, in their order, *Harold, The Foresters, Becket, Queen Mary*. Shakespeare has shown the rise of the English monarchy in his historical plays, of which Pitt said that they were more historical than any history. The unfolding of those institutions, on which the permanence of freedom depends, and whose successful development is the great achievement of England, who turned over to us the task to be carried further, is the purport of the Henrys and Richards and

John of the world's supreme dramatists. Tennyson delineated again the struggle toward the successful establishment of Freedom, but with especial reference to the part which the Church played in that intensely interesting world-drama. The two series of plays, therefore, complement each other, and deserve to be studied side by side. This may be giving to the Tennysonian drama a preëminence which has not been usually ascribed to it, but there is beginning to be considerable warrant for it. Green, the Historian of England, says: "All my researches into the annals of the 12th century have not given me so vivid a conception of the character of Henry II as was embodied in Tennyson's *Becket*." And George Eliot, to whose opinion we shall all be ready to give credence, has remarked that "Tennyson's plays run Shakespeare's close." And Mr. Van Dyke in his admirable monograph on the *Poetry of Tennyson* has expressed the opinion that "It is not too daring to predict that the day is coming when the study of Shakespeare's historical plays will be reckoned no more important to an understanding of English history than the study of Tennyson's trilogy."

Harold, which owes much to Bulwer's novel of that name, deals with the Norman Conquest. The poet indicates that the solid substratum of the English Nation is Saxon, and if it sank for a time before the invading race, it gradually won its way back to the superiority which really belonged to it. The contrast between the two nations at war is strongly presented in the antagonists, Harold and William, the former sturdy and heroic, the latter refined, wily, and full of craft and deceit. The English are torn by internal dissensions, the Normans are the united warriors, the bravest and most brilliant in Europe. But the religious element

enters from the very first. The decrepit and dying Edward the Confessor is more a monk than a king. He had the strongest leanings toward the Normans, and William the Conqueror seems to have had his preference to the throne of England after his death. In a pleasure voyage to Flanders, Harold is wrecked on the coast of Normandy and brought before William. The latter makes him swear that he will not oppose his accession to the English throne; Harolds finds that he has sworn not only by the jewel of St. Pancratius, but the bones of martyrs concealed beneath it — an oath that admits of no evasion. The crafty William has gained his point. Harold indeed ascends the throne, and defends it heroically, but he is haunted and weakened by the remembrance of the oath which he has broken. The noble Saxon falls before the diplomatic and insincere Norman, and the foreign yoke and the intolerant rule are fastened upon the English Nation. As Tennyson says in the introductory sonnet called, *Showday at Battle Abbey,* 1876:

> "A garden here — May breath and bloom of spring,
> The cuckoo yonder from an English elm
> Crying 'With my false egg I overwhelm
> The native nest;' and fancy hears the ring
> Of harness and that dreadful arrow sing,
> And Saxon battle axe clang on Norman helm!
> Here rose the dragon banner of our realm;
> Here fought, here fell, our Norman-slandered King.
> O Garden blossoming out of English blood!
> O strange hate-healer Time! We stroll and stare
> Where might made right eight hundred years ago."

The genuine Englishman, the sturdy Saxon stock, passes into a temporary oblivion; a dynasty alien, and a church

opposed to the interests of the people, are riveted upon an unwilling and stubborn land. The subsequent history of England will be the reëmergence of the suppressed nationality, the gradual winning back of its rights, the establishment of a church that may not antagonize the truer development of the nation. The play possesses numberless passages of beauty and charm, and the battle scene which closes it, with its hymn of the monks, its rapid descriptions of Stigand, the archbishop, its wailings of the heroine, Edith, its cries of the soldiery, and the terrible death of Harold, is not easily matched by an author of any time or land.

The second play of the series is *The Foresters*. It is the lightest and most gracious of the four; it is full of the joyousness of the forest life, and reminds one of the lovely scenes in *As You Like It,* which transpire in the enchanted wood of Arden. The second stage of the development which the plays present finds the Norman dynasty in the full swing of its evil course. The Crusaders have called Richard to the Holy Land, and the wretched John is in the sweep of his abuse of power. The influence of the Church has misled the sovereign into an abandonment of the work which it is given him to do, and he wanders off like an irresponsible knight-errant in search of adventures and in pursuit of an impossible quest. Meanwhile, at home anarchy and misrule occupy the place of power. The noble Earl of Huntington has been outlawed by the mere apology of a regent, because he has stood in the way of one of his minions who wishes to marry the daughter of Sir Richard Lea, the maid Marian. He retires into the forest of Sherwood as the outlaw, Robin Hood, and soon there gathers around him the nucleus of the better elements of the land. When lawlessness is seated

on the throne, lawfulness retreats to the forest; the Seat of the State is wholly changed; the true sovereignty is with the so-called outlaws, the true State is with Robin Hood and his followers, the Saxon strength, the substance of England, is with the reputed rebels, and mere usurpation and falsity hold the empty insignia of government. As Robin says:

> "A price is set
> On this poor head; but I believe there lives
> No man who truly loves and truly rules
> His following, but can keep his followers true.
> I am one with mine. Traitors are rarely bred
> Save under traitor kings. Our Vice-King John
> True King of vice — true play on words — our John
> By his Norman arrogance and dissoluteness,
> Hath made me king of all the discontent
> Of England up thro' all the forest land
> North to the Tyne; being outlawed in a land
> Where law lies dead, we make ourselves the law."

The picture of the Abbot shows the corruption and degradation of the Church, as John displays the inversion of political power, and the State destroying the ends which it was created to subserve. The return of the rightful sovereign solves the various complications, and restores the State from its condition of outlawry, although Richard the Lion-hearted is but a poor representative of the nation struggling toward its realization.

The conflict between Church and State reaches its extreme tension in *Becket*. It is certainly time that the absurd statements about the Tennysonian art being inadequate to the creation of a character should cease. If by the creation of a character is meant one of the leather-lunged and brainless portrayals that are supposed frequently to be such, we may as

well admit at once that Tennyson was quite incapable of producing such an anomaly; but if one asks for vigorous manhood, intense vitality, strong feeling, large intents, and hosts of mistakes and faults accompanying the greatest endeavors, we shall find them in Becket and Henry, his King. The Church had become arrogant and domineering; indeed she had taken to herself all power; even a sovereign was assumed to be no sovereign unless crowned in the traditional manner by the church; her functionaries were not amenable to the law of the land, and were tried and punished for offences only by the Church herself, and they committed the most heinous crimes with comparative impunity. Henry proposed to curb these vast pretensions, and he hoped to succeed in this effort by making his boon companion and chancellor, the brilliant Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury. The latter scorns the proposition at first, and says:

> "Mock me not! I am not even a monk.
> Thy jest — no more. Why, look, is this a sleeve
> For an archbishop?"

Henry touches the rich garment and says:

> "But the arm within
> Is Becket's who hath beaten down my foes.
> I lack a spiritual soldier, Thomas,
> A man of this world and the next to boot."

But after considerable persuasion Becket accepts the primacy of England. From that moment he is a changed man. His friendship for the King, his obligation to the sovereign who has made him what he is, seem flung to the winds; he recognizes himself as the head of a spiritual power which menaces even the State itself. The temptation is one to which so masterful a character can but succumb; he out-churches

the Church in his arrogance and the magnitude of his claims, he out-popes the Pope in the position which he demands for himself and the organization at whose head he is placed. The existence of the State is endangered, and the more so because he connects himself with the popular movements against the pretensions and aggrandizements of the crown. The real interests of constitutional government are with Henry, who will curb and make amenable to English law this sovereignty, whose true seat is in a distant land. It is not necessary to follow the struggle; the English bishops are with the King, and, contrary to precedent, the Archbishop of York crowns the son of Henry as the legitimate successor. Becket responds with interdict upon interdict. At last the King can endure no further; the decisive scene in which the King is stung into the wish for the death of Becket is one of the most powerful in the Tennysonian drama. Henry says to the Archbishop of York:

"Roger of York, you always hated him,
Even when you both were boys at Theobald's.
York: I always hated boundless arrogance,
In mine own cause I strove against him there,
And in thy cause I strive against him now.
Henry: I cannot think he moves against my son,
Knowing right well with what a tenderness
He loved my son.
Roger: Before you made him King.
But Becket ever moves against a King.
The church is all — the crime to be a King.
We trust your Royal Gace, lord of more land
Than any crown in Europe, will not yield
To lay your neck beneath your citizen's heel.
Henry: Not to a Gregory of my stirring! No!"

The King at last is forced into the exclamation, "Will no man rid me of this pestilent priest?" and the brutal Knight Fitzurse and his followers slay Becket at the altar. The victory remains with the King, and religious freedom has taken one more step forward in England. Although the popular movement, with which Becket was in sympathy, subsequently overwhelmed Henry, yet the purport of the play is distinctly that religious freedom demanded the strong hand of an irreverent monarch, unscrupulous and dissolute though he may have been, to subdue the boundless pretensions of a foreign ecclesiastical establishment.

The last act in this drama is found in *Queen Mary*. Mary was the hapless victim of soulless conspirators, who tore her heart in pieces, and remorselessly made use of her in furthering schemes which meant the ruin of England, and which they persuaded her overburdened intelligence into accepting as the best that could be for her land. It is a sad and gloomy play, but it presents us with the triumph of the Saxon monarchy, and its unfaltering determination to establish constitutional government and religious tolerance in the accession of Elizabeth, who says:

"She knew me and acknowledged me her heir,
Prayed me to pay her debts, and keep the Faith;
Then clasped the cross, and passed away in peace,
I left her lying still and beautiful,
More beautiful than in life.
Why would you vex yourself,
Poor sister? Sir, I swear I have no heart
To be your queen. To reign is restless fence,
Tierce, quart, and trickery. Peace is with the dead,
Her life was winter, for her spring was nipped;
And she loved much; pray God she be forgiven.

Cecil: Peace with the dead who never were at peace!
Yet she loved one so much — I needs must say —
That never English monarch dying left
England so little.
Elizabeth: But with Cecil's aid
And others if our person be secured
From traitor stabs — we will make England great."

And that is what she did — made England and Englishmen great, and the Tennysonian drama shows with clearness and insight one path which that greatness took, the path to increasing and widening religious tolerance and freedom, and the establishment of those institutions on which all tolerance and freedom depend.

The remaining plays need not detain us long. The most important one is *The Cup,* which reveals some of the terrors ensuing upon the relentless Roman march of victory against the untamed and luxurious Orient. *The Falcon* is an agreeable love-episode taken from Boccaccio. *The Promise of May* was no doubt an important effort to its author, but its unpleasant subject and treatment make it a rather unsatisfactory affair. The hero, a modern materialist of the extreme type, displays a character the most weak and feelingless and shameless, bringing ruin and degradation on every one with whom he comes in contact. The implication is that the character is the result of the philosophy. One may, perhaps, be inclined to accept that conclusion, but it needs a more persuasive setting.

The dramatic works of Tennyson are in line with the rest of his writings. As the years rolled over him, his message became more truly the voice of that in the century which is the highest and best, which is most affirmative and

consoling, which finds solutions for the doubts and problems of the times, which sees the end of perfect goodness toward which the world forever moves, which finds in history the progressive unfoldment of the excellence which is the substance of the race, and the successful embodiment of that excellence on the earth in forms which permit of its full and free activity. In the last work which he has left he says, amid a host of other utterances to the same purport:

"Moaning your losses, O Earth,
Heart weary and overdone!
But all's well that ends well,
Whirl and follow the sun.

He's racing from heaven to heaven,
And less will be lost than won,
For all's well that ends well,
Whirl and follow the sun.

The reign of the meek upon earth,
O weary one, has it begun?
But all's well that ends well,
Whirl and follow the sun.

For moans will have grown sphere-music,
Or ever your race be run!
But all's well that ends well,
Whirl and follow the sun.

TENNYSON'S SONGS

A Note on Lyric Poetry

POETS who have made a name and a place for themselves among the greater writers often shine as brilliantly in some of the lesser fields of their art as in those on which their reputation chiefly rests. It is thus with the poet who has shown himself to be so sympathetic a representative of the deepest thought and aspiration of his time. Alfred Tennyson will be remembered principally for his *Idyls of the King,* his dramatic works, genuine appreciation of which is slowly but surely growing, and his elegy on the death of the friend of his youth, the melodious and profoundly consoling *In Memoriam*. The writing, however, of these elaborate poems left him leisure to cultivate another garden-space of his art, which yielded him as lovely products as any which he attempted. As a song-writer, he brought us blossoms which in color and perfume are equal to that of any of his contemporaries.

The writing of a good song is one of those difficult achievements which often escape the skill of poets successful in larger undertakings. A song above all ought to have melody; it must so build itself up that the words appear to fall into their places to a tune that masters and pervades them. It must be satisfied with a single moment of human feeling or passion or experience; it should have but little complexity, and its essential simplicity is often its crowning success and difficulty. It is the utterance of the individual soul in its joy

or sorrow, but with such use of the merely individual that we have before us the expression of a sorrow or joy that belongs to all mankind.

It is to this last point that I wish to draw attention, and the light which Tennyson's song-writing throws upon it. Lyric poetry has been called the expression of the individual man; it has given utterance to his special hopes or fears or imaginings. It has, of course, the widest range; patriotism, love, rage, passion, patience, are to be found in it. The true lyric, however, is always individual; the poet pours forth as from himself the feeling which has prompted the song. It is perhaps for this reason that the preëminent lyric poets are less happy in efforts requiring a more impersonal rendering. The intensity of the feeling lessens with the transference to a consciousness other than the poet's own, and the narrative becomes dull beside the vigor of the brief song. The dramatic poets, whose successes span both fields, the inner and the outer, afford us lyrics as fervid as any, notably Shakespeare and Goethe, to whom even Burns and Heine must give place in the appropriate spheres of these latter.

The lyric is the voice of the individual spirit; but as such it can hardly be of wide or enduring interest. Indeed, from this point of view it has a tendency to become simply unintelligble. What is strictly private to me or any one is in the main inexpressible, and makes so faint an appeal upon others that its value as an utterance is very slender. The lyric thus runs the risk of being trivial and vague and obscure, and it needs to be redeemed into largeness of meaning. The individual experience requires to be so treated that large interests relate themselves to it, and express themselves by means of it, and such reserve of the purely private is neces-

sary that the inexplicable is avoided, and the universal, which is the native land of all men, and therefore most intimately known by them, shines through it, makes it entirely apprehensible, and elevates it into charm and beauty, for these latter belong only to that which is permanent, and are part of the essential life of man. The lyric remains the voice of the unique experience; but the poet, by his subtle comprehension and power of imaginative interpenetration, reveals through it the larger and truer life which alone can give the experience genuine value and import.

The songs of Tennyson illustrate this principle in a marked degree, and these poems are among the most suggestive of their class. They will repay very careful study, and nowadays, when the minor poet is legion, and his brief effusions meet us on all sides, a recurrence to the practice of a great artist will perhaps do the art no harm. In no place is the principle more fully illustrated than in Tennyson's dialect poems, and nowhere are the dangers peculiar to lyric poetry more marked than in verse of that kind. The very medium employed is a particularizing one; and the likelihood is that the merest truism, or details wholly incapable of arousing any interest, will make up the poem, as any one can prove for himself by translating an ordinary dialect ditty into English.

To begin with a poem in which the principle has very clear and simple illustration, the lyric beginning, "The splendor falls on castle walls," one of the interludes of *The Princess,* has received deserved commendation, and within its brief compass the scene evoked is certainly particularized enough; a competent painter would have no difficulty in placing it upon his canvas. The mountain, the cataract, the lake, the long level light, are all brought vividly before

us; and then the resounding bugle, and the echoes repeating themselves from cliff and scar, and fading away "like horns from elf-land faintly blowing." All is definite, present, clear; then come the lines in the closing stanza:

> "Our echoes roll from soul to soul
> And grow forever and forever."

It is as if a door were opened into a new world; the real and the outer melt away; the transitory disappears, and we are admitted into a deeper, truer realm, where the echo is living as well as the song, where the thing done comes back to us through the eyes of a friend, where the permanent shines as an all-including and all-supporting beneficence.

Again, in another of the interludes in the same poem:

> "Home they brought her warrior dead,
> She nor swooned nor uttered cry;
> All her maidens, watching, said,
> 'She must weep or she will die.'"

They comforted her with praises of her dead warrior; they called him worthy to be loved; one of the maidens removed the cloth from the high and severe face; it was all in vain. Then the wise old nurse stepped forward, and placed her little son on her knee.

> "Like summer tempest came her tears;
> 'Sweet my child, I live for thee.'"

The life which had seemed buried with the dead soldier was here again in visible and gracious beauty; his purposes, his activities, the very cause for which he had given up all, were renewed in the noble child. In the presence of the reality for which he had done so much, and to which she

might devote what of effort was left to her, a stony grief seemed weak and futile; she had indeed touched the immortality of which his mortal part and experience had been only a sign and manifestation.

Again, in the beautiful lyric whose music is so fine that I cannot forbear putting it down here entire:

> " All along the valley, stream that flashes white,
> Deepening thy voice with the deepening of the night,
> All along the valley where the waters flow
> I walked with one I loved two and thirty years ago.
> All along the valley while I walked to-day,
> The two and thirty years were a mist that rolled away;
> For all along the valley, down thy rocky bed,
> The living voice to-day was as the voice of the dead,
> And all along the valley, by rock and cave and tree,
> The voice of the dead was a living voice to me."

The experience is again a simple one: a revisiting of a place known years before; the lovely landscape again makes its impression. But suddenly a deeper thought emerges behind and above the present enjoyment; the visible passes into the truer and the unseen; a whole lifetime of hopes and struggles and friendships surges around us; we are once more amid that long and triumphant wrestle with the whole of Modern Doubt whose record is in the pages of *In Memoriam;* and out of the present and simple and transient, we find our way into that victory, permanent and unassailable, which is the grand result of that elegy, whose close is a paean.

It would be easy to carry this analysis of Tennyson's lyrics further; and one might show that, in all his maturer work, this union of an individual experience with a larger and truer purport is to be found. The form of the poem has all

the fervor and strength of feeling which belongs to the limited concerns into which we throw so much of our life; the content has all the largeness and vigor of those interests which in our best moments we know to be the real values of life, but which too often vanish and fade away into the common light of our day. We must not, however, lengthen this note too far; yet we cannot help alluding to one or two more. The songs scattered up and down the *Idyls of the King* are very much in point. There is Enid's melodious conquest of Fortune and utterance of man's real superiority:

> "Turn, Fortune, turn thy wheel with smile or frown,
> With that wild wheel we go not up or down;
> Our hoard is little, but our hearts are great."

The insight flashes forth in the line:

> "For man is man and master of his fate."

Then there is the subtle and ambiguous song wherewith Vivien, wily deceiver and wretched self-deceived, deludes both Merlin and herself:

> "'In Love, if Love be Love, if Love be ours,
> Faith and Unfaith can ne'er be equal powers;
> Unfaith in aught is want of faith at all."

And the doubt-tongued line at the close:

> "And trust me not at all, or all in all."

When the Love is of the kind which fills up Vivien, the sooner the rift in the lute is made, the better. Distrust of the lower love, which Emerson in his poem calls the Demonic, needs to be complete and final; the wizard, but unfortunately not the wise man, allows the vision of a faith perfect and flawless to float before him, brought up by these alluring and

twilighted tones, and the yielding up of his secret is a small price to pay for the supposititious devotion.

Tennyson's dialect poems are a singular illustration of the suggestion made in this paper. Such a poem as *The Northern Cobbler* shows the true character which belongs to poetry of this kind. All through it is a light which never was on sea or shore. The strength of will which can keep secure in the presence of allurement has learned one of the secrets of life. I suppose the poem and its companion, *Owd Roa,* are familiar to every one. They certainly should be, and the writers of dialect poetry will learn from them how a medium in itself more or less forbidding and intractable can be made to serve the best purposes of real literature.

That Tennyson was himself conscious of this principle of his art appears, I think, clearly enough from *The Brook*. In that poem, all the temporal eventualities of the story, on the whole rather narrow, are projected against the largeness produced by the lyric. Beyond the slender variations of the daily life, there is indeed a somewhat that goes on forever, and that daily life receives its genuine significance only in the illumination which this latter throws upon it.

The inference which I wish to draw from the practice of Tennyson is that a lyrical poem must avoid the danger of becoming too individual, that, in so far as it does so, it runs the risk of being wholly unintelligible; the purely individual can be understood only by the individual, or else it is vapid and trivial. The last, I am afraid, is a trouble which is fairly on us. After all, most of us believe only in the fragmentary and the isolated, in the immediate emotion; hence, as far as we can, we express it. Our lyrics are in consequence full of strange and weird experiences, which will bear no touch

of real examination. What lyric poetry, quite as much as any poetry, needs, is thought, a reasonable content, which, belonging to the general life of man, has in it something of an enduring quality, something to keep it fresh and sweet, a salt to counteract the inevitable ravages of the hours. Mere effervescence of momentary feeling will hardly do that, and morbid extravagances will do it far less.

The lyric calls for the musician's art to give it its final grace and beauty, but music is of all arts the most immediately universal; indeed, it can hardly give voice to the trivial at all. Schubert found in Heine and Goethe his best words for setting. Wagner said that music only elaborates the tune implicit in the poem; but that is to say again that a lyric poem, to be just and strong and lovely, must show behind and above and around its simplicity a realm that is really infinite and everlasting.

THE POETRY OF ROBERT BROWNING

WE are all prepared to admit that a poet upon whose fame the winnowing hand of Time has set its seal should be approached under the belief that an understanding of his meaning will discover avenues to heights and depths of thought and feeling profoundly real and important; if some great reputations have failed to make good their claims in the stringent jousts of modern criticism, yet others have come forth from those combats more resplendent in panoply of intellectual armor and assured of immunity from attack for several generations. There are stars in the spiritual firmament that can know no diminution of luster; the destroying might of the centuries, potent to dispossess of their places all weaker luminaries, has had no power on them; against the fame of these the voices of detraction grow gradually mute, and die in the solitude wherein the greatest perforce must dwell. That we should sit at the feet of a Dante or Goethe to learn wisdom and gain light in the darkness of the paths wherein we wend to greater or lesser issues is a necessity in the nature and texture of the world; that by the side of these should one by one in the process of the ages range themselves others, their brothers and co-workers, is equally a necessity; and there can no longer be any doubt that Browning's place among the *Dei Majores* of literature is secure. If the study of the great master be more than a caprice or passing mode, we affirm by our interest and labor that his writings belong to those quarries of spiritual wealth from whence we may bear

ever-increasing burdens, which shall be transformed to the precious material out of which we hope to build our lives into the temple which contains the statue of a realized ideal. It is not so long since the professional critics denied of our poet any such high and mighty function; they did not hesitate to accuse him of willful obscurity and artful oddity of expression tending to render darker what of itself would be dark enough; nor is it so much longer ago since the name of Browning was greeted with a somewhat incredulous smile; here and there someone alluded to the charm and loveliness of *Pippa Passes* or the passionate grief and atonement of the *Blot i' the Scutcheon,* but the major part of the poet's writings was a *terra incognita,* from which intruders or curiosity-seekers were warned off summarily, if they did not wish to lose themselves in impassable bogs, where foot of man could find no solid resting-place, or enter as in *Sordello* into a rarefied atmosphere which healthful lungs could not be expected to breathe. Many a critic, thoughtful and catholic, has had serious difficulties with Browning, and has strangely failed in finding his way through the avenues of the poet's intentions.

And perhaps it is not an easy thing for any one to find his way through the devious way of the poet's intentions. The charges of predetermined quaintness of diction and purposed darkening of his meaning are unworthy of the slenderest attention. With the revolt against formalism of style and superficial logical accuracy of thought, which English poetry successfully inaugurated and consummated during the earlier years of the century, the eyes and minds of poets were directed from the writings of Pope and Dryden to those of the impassioned if erratic spirits who have made forever

glorious the times of the great Elizabeth. At the reopened fountains of that literature so genuine, so fervid with all natural emotions, so contemptuous of mere prescription or external restraint, the Brownings, husband and wife, drank until the form which their ideas took suffered a " sea-change into something rich and strange," and assumed in a measure those proportions which the earlier poetry had left as models but which had grown unfamiliar through the forgetfulness of ungrateful successors. Not alone the form, however, took on peculiarities, which acted as deterrents to languid readers, but a whole domain of ideas, into which previous poets had barely entered, conquered some of its provinces, and bore thence some marvelous blossoms and loaded branches of fruit, offered to Robert Browning a fascination which proved irresistible. Other men had portrayed the human soul in action, had marked its transformations from good to ill, from degradation to expiatory wisdom, had held upon the outstretched palm of art a morsel of existence, and molded it into a thing of beauty for the welfare and delight of spectator or reader. This poet looked beyond; he took the soul of man, pure and simple, for his inheritance, and proceeded to make valid his claim to it by an analysis whose subtlety becomes one of the special achievements and distinctions of his time. With spiritual eyes as keen as any that ever shone on the planet he gazed into that abyss of potencies, which we have denominated the soul of humanity, until the whirl and tempest there revealed themselves as manifestations of law and principle. Many a lampless darkness he filled with the illumination of his all-penetrating imagination, and the labyrinth lay disclosed to the apprehension of his age and generation. Says a recent critic and admirer:

"The action of so bright and swift a spirit gives insight as it were to the eyes and wings to the feet of our own; the reader's apprehension takes fire from the writer's, and he catches from a subtler and more active mind the infection of spiritual interest; so that any candid and clear-headed student finds himself able to follow for the time in fancy the leadership of such a thinker with equal satisfaction on any course of thought or argument." These writings present, as it were, a chemistry of spirit and dream; the evanescent filaments of emotions, the ethereal strands that make the texture of ideal conformations on which "whoso gazes, faints entangled in their mazes," the infinite facets of interpretation which flash from the diamond of a single characterization are subjected to a dismemberment and scrutiny to which it will be difficult to find a parallel anywhere. But the poet does not walk in the realm on which he has planted his banner of possession with an equal step; the strange things which he sees sometimes bewilder him, the novel message which he delivers sometimes falls from faltering lips and stumbles in broken accents. The lesser mind, the auditor, must perforce think the communication dark and perverse, until, through patient attendance upon the steps of the master, he too succeeds in orienting himself in these extraordinary lands of builded longings and aspirations and ecstacies. Browning is, therefore, obscure through excess of light; such is certainly true of the poems in which he has succeeded; but his path, like that of all innovators, is strewn with mournful and misshapen failures of an activity not yet sure of itself.

There appear in every age men who are the forerunners of the results about to be achieved, who break with the

traditions, and disclose new paths, wherein the destiny of mankind seeks new splendors, new revelations. The world, to be sure, refuses to recognize its benefactors, subjects them to every form of contumely and suffering, obliges them to force their transcendent gifts on an unwilling beneficiary. So Wagner, the Shakespeare of Musicians, beholding the mechanical wrappages with which the free limbs of melody had been bound, fetters disturbing its necessary development and rendering it an unfit or feeble coadjutor of the brother poetry, with which it should be so closely allied, tore them asunder and made song, as it should be, infinite. The musical forms which he found ready made to his hand he rejected for their inadequacy, and sought for such novel ones as should serve as the musical equivalents of his novel artistic intentions. In art as in history the struggle has ever been towards greater freedom, and the discovery has been constantly made that this freedom is but another name for the evolution of a subject according to its own inner laws. Prescription, external restraint, have again and again set themselves up as finalities, and as repeatedly been ignominiously driven from the field. The Wagnerian achievement is the musical unfolding of a subject in accordance with its own intrinsic nature, the exact reproduction in sound of the ideal process which underlies the artistic purpose; and Browning is to be classed with this unique genius — he has essayed similar things in poetry. He has found the older poetic forms too precise and contracted for his meaning, and he has modified them to suit his needs and aims. His versification has bolder flights and freer cadences; his lyrics attempt melodies unheard before, and are full of surprising effects; the language assumes a flexibility, a vital vigor, a

suppleness, a graciously yielding adaptability to ideas the most singular and far-fetched, which it has hitherto hardly possessed. The English of the modern poets is a nobler medium for the expression of thought than ever; and it is to writers like Carlyle and the Brownings that we are largely indebted for this result. The latter have restored graces from the earlier poets which had been forgotten; and they have discovered turns and developments of rhythm and verbiage to which poetry had up to their time been a stranger. The work of Browning and Wagner presents many similarities; in both there is that profound study of the Middle Age which restores that misunderstood epoch to living recognition; in both there is that understanding of the Middle Age which perceives in it the seeds of all modern life and civilization; in both the artistic form is the strict correlative of the *motif,* the subject, the story, the emotion; in both are heights of vision which had not been attempted in the respective mediums. Both stand at the beginning of a new era, and both alike have waited patiently for that audience which they have created, and which at last stimulated them to their greatest efforts and successes.

The poet has essayed the deepest problem of his time. In a critical age, when the foundations of faith have been assailed as never before, and those ideas, upon which we depend as the very substratum of our intellectual world, have been discredited and subjected to a negative scrutiny which has threatened to reduce them to a merely relative, not to say sensuous, existence, this poet has fearlessly thrown himself into the conflict of opinions, and as fearlessly attempted the composition of differences. He has had no terror lest a familiarity with metaphysical subtleties or sci-

entific discussions should impede the free flow of his poetic inventions. Some critics have expressed great alarm at the rapid strides of modern science, and have imagined that art is to receive its death blow at the hands of modern chemistry or mathematics or critical acumen. But the preëminent writers of the day have not shown any such dispositon to dread the rising sciences of nature, and their attitude ought to constitute a refutation of the fine theory. Browning in England and Emerson in America hailed every new discovery as another field from whence Art might draw its needed material. Poetry has nothing to dread from the accumulation of knowledge upon knowledge; the greatest of the moderns, Goethe, was great in science as in poetry. The answers which Browning gives to the theological questions which he propounds are affirmative and consolatory. His poems in this kind are healing; he appears as the physician, who, having suffered from these maladies himself, offers a cure which he has found sovereign. Through the darkness of the modern doubt, and it is a Stygian darkness without moon or stars, he has found the way into daylight and reality again. It has been said, and, perhaps, truly, that such poetry cannot be of the highest order, but to those seeking a way out of the nightmare of pessimism, or the doctrine of the merely relative knowing, a torch-glare upon a steep and rocky footpath worn by a heroic climber possesses an attraction not surpassed by poetical garden plots more closely trimmed to suit the fancies of the landscape gardener. Browning has found it possible to believe in the Infinite Spirit, whose all pervasive activity underprops the movement of history and the destiny of the individual soul; he looks beyond the narrow verge of time, and recognizes the endlessness of development, which

is the appanage of all consciousness; somehow he sees that all forces of nature and life and destiny unite in a realization, whose substance is all light, and whose eternity is goodness itself.

But Browning's home is in the moral and psychological world. In the preface to *Sordello* he says: "The historical decoration was purposely of no more importance than a background requires; and my stress lay in the incidents in the development of a soul; little else is worth study. I, at least, always thought so." These words indicate the familiar bent of his spirit. It may be safely said that no such analysis of human motive has ever been attempted, and no such success achieved. It is the human soul pure and simple; the outer is left shadowy and purposely obscured; thought, hope, aspiration, despair, are seized in themselves, and subjected to a disintegration subtler than any hitherto undertaken. Hence his poems often have a largeness of application which is one source of their difficulty. In such a poem as *Instans Tyrannus* one misses the point unless the subject be viewed in its utmost generality; we behold there delineated every form of external constraint, every tyranny of life or custom, which impedes the soul's free unfoldment. If in *Hugues of Saxe-Gotha* is depicted the finitude of all human effort, in the *Abt Vogler* we behold those rare but certain moments of experience, when humanity attains completeness and unity with the divine. I repeat we shall miss the point of these poems if we say that, as some suggest, it is through music only that such height is attainable; to the poet the extemporizations of the musician are but representatives of all human effort, which in its highest reach and fulfillment is the very deed of the infinite, and the reproduction of the

divine. In the dazzling array of lyrics which the poet has given us, experience after experience is depicted of varying importance, but always with this same breadth of view. Other poets have sung sweeter songs of love, or patriotism, or hope; no one has shed such light upon the hidden recesses of action and motive. Sometimes the regions into which we are led are hardly wholesome and agreeable; not even the unmistakable intellectual abundance of food furnished by the *Inn Album* can quite reconcile us to such a story of misadventure and folly; but where there is such an assemblage of notable and resplendent successes, we shall not be troubled if we find a poem like *Roland to the Dark Tower Came* an enigma taxing to the uttermost the interpreter's skill.

The dramas of Browning occupy a place quite by themselves. It would seem a hopeless attempt to represent them on the stage. Even the one in which the story pursues a course the simplest, and the characterization is least subtle and Browningese, I refer to *Colombe's Birthday,* there is yet such slightness of outer pomp and circumstance, such wealth of motive dissected and unraveled, that no representation can do it justice. In the Shakespearian drama life moves before us in all its profundity and mystery; the personages interest us as real beings; they move and act before us as flesh and blood realities; the action has the swiftness and marvelousness of life itself; but these are persons whose secret is as hard for us to penetrate as the secret of our nearest friends, who may remain to the end secrets to us; did Macbeth believe in ghosts, and why did not Hamlet slay the king when a mere moral scruple turned the wavering scale? But the Browning drama is, so to speak, mankind turned inside out; the play is a series of monologues; each speech indeed

is a short explanation which the character makes of his motives and intents; the very soul is laid bare; but there is no action, no movement, perhaps no drama. *In a Balcony* is typical; the whole interest centers in the complicated consciousness of Constance, who not with entire success lays bare her heart in these trying scenes. In a *Blot i' the Scutcheon* there is the same defect and the same success; if Romeo and Juliet could be conceived to analyze their most secret hearts, they might perhaps talk like Mildred and Mertoun; but it is a great stretch of the imagination to think of Romeo and Juliet doing any such thing; as in Shakespeare they would cast their whole life into act, and perish, if need be, for their love. It is the delineation of contending motives and hopes and aspirations, not the splendor of conflicting deeds. Such subtleties, it must be said, are for the student and the closet, not for the stage. No man has a right to count upon an audience of psychologists to sit in judgment upon refinements exceeding any which poetry has as yet essayed.

The poet is the apostle of the free development of the human soul. He is genuine and professedly republican in a more real sense, perhaps, than are some poets who fill the world with extravagant odes in laudation of freedom. The *Lost Leader* displays his attitude to the great republican movement of the nations; but even there he is more interested in the personality of the deserter than the cause the latter has abandoned. Over and over again he shows how progress, movement, development, are the healthy elements and environment of humanity; perfection itself appears only a dead calm unless it may manifest itself as a ceaseless endeavor to uplift others to the same level. Perfected humanity could only be as the activity to build less perfect creatures

into living unity with itself. The form this doctrine takes with the poet is often a disdain of the conventional, of the constraints that are not self-imposed, and, therefore, not the unimpeded expression of the spirit. In *Waring* we see this determination to free oneself from the bondage of circumstance and condition. Waring is happily situated as to friends and prospects; but something constrains him, he can endure no longer the monotony of his daily living, he flees to warmer skies and more primitive modes of life. In the *Flight of the Duchess* this theme is treated in a full length portrait; better the gypsy life than the slavery which accompanies the empty pomp of the heartless court, and the misery of a marriage without love. The cloud-swept skies, the boundless expanse of plain and meadow, all lands and scenes are the appanages of the gypsy's freedom; who would not exchange for them the droning splendors of a routine that is flameless as lifeless, a round of pleasures destitute of meaning, a perfunctory performance of duties that have in them no element of obligation. The doctrine is one of the precious achievements of modern times; the Procrustean theory of human development is happily a thing of the past; each one is valuable for the special talent he possesses, and that talent is to be converted into an instrument for the elevation of mankind. No one at least in England has sung this theme so well as our poet, though perhaps we may take exception to some of the forms in which he has expressed it.

Connected with his love of individuality, nay, a necessary corollary from it, is his frequent justification of abnormal mental conditions, or rather his representation of the grounds on which such personalities have justified their conduct to themselves. Nothing exists without a reason; a human being

is at least sustained by a confidence in himself, which is at the same time the touch of the universal spirit upon his special form of entity; Caliban in Shakespeare is a bold outline, the sensuous man in a somewhat repulsive characterization; the Donatello of Hawthorne is the sensuous man trembling on the verge of a birth into spirituality; with Browning Caliban justifies to himself all that he is, and all that he is likely to become, by finding the source of his peculiarities in the idol which he worships and which he hypostasizes as the reason of everything he knows and is. In Prince Hohenstiel-Schwangau there is an elaborate apology of a debasing tyranny for the despicable part it has played on the world's theatre. Be it remembered that the justification is the creature's own, not the poet's; the lesson is the old and yet ever new one of infinite tolerance and patience, and willingness to understand. Men are masks that conceal; what is behind is their *raison d'etre,* their reality, their justification; not by externals, but by what we intrinsically are, is the final account to be made up.

It is thus that Browning is profoundly humane and modern. If one were asked to lay his finger upon an English poem most characteristic of the modern world, we could not do otherwise, I am persuaded, than lay is upon the *Ring and the Book*. In that poem psychological analysis has attained the heaven of all its desires; into those labyrinths of spirituality so varying in character, so generalized into largeness of significance, into those splendors of noblest human motives, into those forms of human aberration and misery, we pass as into a new realm miraculously revealed as the soul and life of the world we see around us. The poem has objectionable features from an artistic point of view; it is

one of those stories of crime in which Browning too often indulges; it can have no interest of plot or narrative, as the story is all told in the first book and then repeated again and again from different standpoints; but never before have all the facts of a tale been so flashed upon the reader's apprehension as in this poem. The right of free judgment has never been so vindicated in poetry; the infinite worth of human personality has never been so demonstrated. In it, too, Browning's style attains its noblest strength and power; the language seems almost to bend and snap under the strain put upon it of embodying ideas so intense, emotions so deep. Human life perhaps has no elements which are not here dramatized at full length; and over all and encircling all is to be found the realm of the universal judgment, assigning to each and all their fitting niche and function, the will of the infinite reason, speaking here through the Pope, but uttering that verdict, free from prejudice, out of space, and beyond all time, the conclusion of eternity, the veritable last judgment, which is the ever-present one, the deed, the life, reflected from the mirror of the all. It takes intellectual courage to read the book; the familiar sights and sounds of the outer, which is our pleasant home, are to be left behind; but it may be called the America of poetry; the realm in which above all price is esteemed the individual soul.

The art poems of Browning form a distinct and distinguishing department of his work. As usual with him, they are thoroughly dramatic; he allows Abt Vogler the musician's privilege to decry the other arts in order to aggrandize music; that passage displays the real dramatic spirit of his poetry; the poet is so lost in his creation, that the latter is indulged in accusations against the art which produced him.

The passage can only be matched in Shakespeare where Hotspur bursts into his fierce onslaught on ballad-mongers, and meter-contrivers, fools, who are nothing, only poets. But it is rare that an artist can so far return upon his own activity as to subject even that to an analysis; to a Goethe his own productions, after he had receded far enough from them, became wholly objective realities, a part of the outer world of phenomena, and as such amenable to his critical investigation. He could study the laws of artistic productiveness in his own works as serenely as the laws of development in plants, or the formation of colors apart from the distracting prism. In his art poems Browning does something similar, but always with the special turn that appears to be the very nerve of his genius; the various phases of the artistic consciousness are dramatized into a species of moral allegories, so to speak, whose meanings ramify into all the realms of spiritual endeavor and aspiration.

Browning's art has sometimes been called the art of the grotesque, and there is sufficient reason for the appellation. He has abundant humor, and his strange rhymes are often the exhibitions of his intellect in the wantonness of mere play. But did any one ever ask himself why rhymes should be confined to the kind which the books alone dignify as the correct ones? Are there latent in the languages harmonies which have never yet responded to any touch, melodies sweeter than any which have yet been sung? Are we sure that the forms of poetic art have all been discovered, and that there is nothing new under the aesthetic sun? I for one am persuaded that the last word has not yet been said, and that these peculiarities of Browning are the loosening of bonds which too long have fettered us.

He stood at the gates of the future; the sun of the yet unrisen day shone upon his uplifted face; the poets who are singing now sit at his feet as their master. His is the freest art, the noblest manipulation of his material, the profoundest application of ideas, that has been given us in the century just come to its close. To-day listens to him, takes unto itself his results, works with his methods, dwells in his hope, uses his weapons, proceeds onward with the strengthening and elaborating of the world, which he saw and knew and loved, and which we recognize as the ultimate realization and dwelling place of a self-evolving, peace-loving, ennobled, and unified mankind.

HONORÉ DE BALZAC

The Novelist of Society

THE illustrious writer whose name appears at the head of this article was born in the city of Tours, France, in the year 1799, and died at the comparatively early age of fifty-one. He belongs to the splendid group of great men who made the beginning and first half of the nineteenth century memorable in a way that only few half-centuries can rival. In Germany, Goethe was completing the work which has taken its place with the greatest work done by any man or in any time; in England, Walter Scott, Byron, Wordsworth, Shelley and Coleridge, were giving expression to the new spirit which was transforming the literature of their country; in his own land, Balzac enjoyed the friendship of Victor Hugo and George Sand. He was himself one of those great laborers in his chosen field, whose full measure is not taken by the generation that produces them, but whose adequate appreciation belongs to later times which can see them aright.

The family of Balzac was in comfortable circumstances, and in a fair way to do for him whatever was needed for his best development. He does not appear to have been a model student at the school to which he was sent, and his clerical preceptors seem to have succeeded but ill with the young boy, for he returned to his home in a state of complete nervous exhaustion. He had read extensively in the books that pleased him, and showed considerable precocity of mind

and heart, since he wrote, at this early age, a *Treatise on the Will,* which one of his teachers incontinently threw into the fire. Balzac, in his novel of *Louis Lambert,* gives a curious exposition of his mental and moral condition at this time. Under the judicious care of his mother, his health was restored, and his ambitions were greatly stirred by the removal of the family to Paris in 1814. There he listened to the instruction of Guizot, Villemain, and Cousin, and the public libraries and bookstalls found in him an ardent visitor and devotee. He was intended for the law, pursued the necessary studies, and passed the regular examinations. At twenty-one he was a singularly promising young man, from the ordinary practical point of view. His father now wished him to enter upon the real exercise of his profession; but after much consideration he was allowed the privilege of making a trial of his powers in the way of literature. He was ensconced in an attic in Paris, given a meager income, and permitted to go on his way undisturbed. He wrote a tragedy called *Cromwell,* which his family, and a certain professor called in to assist at the reading, condemned forthwith. He was taken back home; but the freedom of the life which he had led, and the absence of a favorite sister, who was now Madame Surville, made him long for the attic which he had abandoned. He shortly left home for good, and definitely undertook the career which gave the world his *Human Comedy* and him a place in literary history which has become more and more distinguished with the passage of the years.

Balzac's earlier work fell in that period of intense romanticism which swept every writer into its irresistible current. The eighteenth century had been an age of reason, an impersonal search for truth, social and political. With Rousseau

came the reaction, the assertion of individuality in all regions of thought and life. Foreign literatures brought their contributions to this great stream which bore older structures to apparent ruin in its tumultuous rush — Spain with her ballads, England with her historical novels, Germany with her heroes of revolt. Balzac brought his slender offering of sensational romances. They are stories which he was afterwards glad to ignore, and with which even his warmest admirers do not find it necessary to become familiar. These were, however, years of growth and development, and helped to lay the foundations of the real achievements which were to come; and finally, in the year 1829, appeared the *Chouans,* which brought him success, and his apprenticeship was fairly over. Balzac was on the way to the profound study of man and the society in which he has his being, that gives character and quality to the mature novels, and has in it the elements of a realism fitted to bear remarkable fruit among his successors.

He had, during these years, entered upon business enterprises, which appeared to him promising but left him with a burden of debt, heavy and harassing. He found his way to many and various friendships with the great of his time. He displayed the contradictory characteristics which are not absent from the men of his period and nation. He was a good hater as well as lover, desired the possession of wealth, which he made wild attempts to secure by commercial enterprise or speculation, became a collector of pictures and curios, traveled extensively, and touched life at all points. Near the close of his career he married Madame Hanska, with whom he had long been acquainted, and who became known to him through a correspondence which she opened

with some enquiries about his book *Le Peau de Chagrin.* Romanticist and realist, sensuous and spiritual-minded, dreamer and scientific observer, indefatigable and intemperate toiler, Balzac truly lived only in the creation of those stories which were separate chapters in the great work which he had planned, and which indeed took all humanity for its province.

The history of these writings is one of constantly increasing vogue and appreciation, not only in his own country but in all lands. Translation on translation has made its appearance in English, although the difficulty of a satisfactory rendering might well give the most courageous pause. Some time ago, Miss Katharine Prescott Wormley made a beginning in this country, and she has found it necessary practically to go through the entire list. Other translations have appeared, in England, and we have another American edition, with copious introductions, under the editorship of Professor W. P. Trent of Columbia University. It may be said that twenty years ago the name of Balzac outside of France awoke but a feeble echo of surprise and wonderment; to-day his is no longer a reputation confided to the fostering care of scholars and eager students of literatures other than their own. He has entered into his kingdom, and made captive readers in all lands and climes.

The opinions about him are in the nature of the case widely different. Professor Dowden says of him: "There is something gross in Balzac's genius; he has little wit, little delicacy, no sense of measure, no fine self-criticism; . . . he piles sentence on sentence, hard and heavy as the accumulated stones of a cairn. Did he love his art for its own sake? It must have been so; but he esteemed it also as an implement

of power, as the means of pushing towards fame and grasping gold." On the other hand, Taine places him with Shakespeare; Professor Harry Thurston Peck has said that " at the last his name will be placed higher still than Shakespeare's, at the very apex of the pinnacle of fame "; and Professor Trent gives him a position but little below this.

Balzac's literary production, during his brief twenty years of real activity, was most extraordinary. It is impossible here even to mention his undisputed masterpieces, but such books as *Le Père Goriot, Eugénie Grandet, César Birotteau, Le Cousin Pons, La Cousine Bette, La Duchesse de Langeais, Le Peau de Chagrin, La Recherche de L'Absolu, Seraphita, Le Médicin de Campagne,* come immediately into one's consciousness. They seem to span the entire field of human life, to penetrate its depths, to ascend its heights, to give a reproduction singularly like the original. The characters that people the world which has arisen under this Prospero's wand have a reality that is wonderful; the experiences through which they move have a vividness that is as remarkable; the catastrophes that ensue through their weaknesses and misadventures, which are seen in full proportion and consequence in the strong light that is one of the romancer's chief gifts, are appalling. He has the naturalist's power of burying himself in the individual whom he is studying; he analyzes his subjects with an assurance that leaves nothing undiscovered. He has the impartiality which a creator must have; these men and women grow and move and live; they are observed with keen accuracy as they plan and act and develop; they pursue their own ends, and are confronted by the destinies which they have woven for themselves.

But we come now to the novelist's great achievement,

which, in the Preface to the *Human Comedy,* he has announced as his main endeavor, and which Professor Trent calls " the principal of coördination in fiction." These personages were to be seen in organic relation with each other, in vital connection with the social environment which so profoundly acted upon them. This is a very different affair from the reappearance in a later book of men and women who have had their entrance in an earlier one. It is a study of society as a whole, of the evolution of character in the milieu which has so much to do with its formation; it is a bold anticipation of views and doctrines that have had their authoritative exposition elsewhere and later. It is perhaps not out of place here to give a quotation from Balzac's preface to his *Human Comedy* in which he sums up his intentions:

" It was no small task to depict the two or three thousand conspicuous types of a period; for this is, in fact, the number presented to us by each generation, and which the *Human Comedy* will require. This crowd of actors, of characters, this multitude of lives, need a setting — if I may be pardoned the expression, a gallery. Hence the very natural division, as already known, into Scenes of Private Life, of Provincial Life, of Parisian, Political, Military, and Country Life.[1] Under these six heads are classified all the studies of manners, which form the history of society at large, of all its *faits et gestes,* as our ancestors would have said. These six classes cor-

[1] The *Human Comedy* (an appellation which of course suggests the *Divine Comedy*) is divided into three main sections, viz.: The *Studies of Manners* (*Etudes de Moeurs*), the *Philosophical Studies* (*Etudes Philosophique*), the *Analytical Studies* (*Etudes Analytiques*). These are respectively the moral, metaphysical, psychological sections of the work. The divisions in the text are divisions of the *Studies of Manners.*

respond, indeed, to familiar conceptions. Each has its own sense and meaning, and answers to an epoch in the life of man. . . . "My work has its geography as it has its genealogy and its families, its places and things, its persons and their deeds; as it has its heraldry, its noble and its commonalty, its artisans and peasants, its politicians and dandies, its army, — in short, a whole world of its own."

What is to be said finally of this immense work? Has the author succeeded in his endeavor? To have made the effort and conceived the plan are in themselves remarkable achievements. To have in his day vigorously placed himself side by side with the famous Geoffroy Saint Hilaire, espoused the cause of evolution, and illustrated it in his stories, is a high thing for any man to have done. But are these figures genuine types of human thought and aspiration, universally recognized and recognizable, as Ulysses unquestionably is, as Hamlet and Faust are? Is this the world of free humanity, high, pure, and simple, which we find in the best art that is known to us? Let the generations of readers who are in store for Balzac answer.

THE LIBERATOR SAINT OF ITALY

THE story of the great Mystics makes an interesting and remarkable chapter in the progress and development of mankind. Side by side with the religions and philosophies that have been the profound and influential teachers of the race, has moved the procession of the specially illumined men and women, who have emphasized the deepening message of the ages from a standpoint and comprehension more or less individual, and furnishing a witness of the unfolding truth, cogent and alluring. The Mystics have labored diligently within the field of the established faiths, but often with distinct antagonisms to popular and ruling doctrines and institutions. Indeed they have usually occupied the place of reformers and liberators; they have made vehement attacks upon privilege and prerogative, the sources of manifold and tyrannizing evils; they have been voices in the wilderness, crying out against manifest and powerful wrong; they have brought healing and regeneration from direct contact with the essential Life and Thought.

The Mystics have appeared in all nations and times. The mind of Japan was singularly susceptible to the revelations which make the substance of the Mystics' report and narrative; even in prosaic and moralistic China there were reactions against the prevalent Confucianism that lifted the veil from before the sanctuary; in India the *Gita-Govinda* rivals the *Song of Songs* in its impassioned disclosures of relations that are to be found discussed at length in Mystic

Literature everywhere; and the *Bhagavat-Gita* presents a dialogue which has found its echoes again and again in book after book. Persia was a luxuriant soil for the growth of poems that indicate and illustrate experiences not belonging to the ordinary light of the common day; even the skeptical Omar has in some interpretations been made the bearer of a transcendent intelligence. The *Song of Solomon* aroused the middle-age thinkers to a long line of kindred and supramundane revelations. Plato, Philo, Plotinus, deal with realms to which the thought of man is not unaccustomed, but which require an unwearied wing and an unusual exercise of energy. The Mystic, however, found a most congenial home and responsive audience during the Middle Ages. The ardent subjectivity of mankind awoke to a wonderful consciousness of itself, and began to discover regions that had hardly met the eye before. Bonaventura, Bernard of Clairvaux, Nicholas of Cusa, Saint Catherine of Siena, belong to a cloud of witnesses who have an extraordinary message to deliver, and they present it with singular nobility and marked unanimity. The Mystic tradition has come down to modern times in France, in England, in America. The transcendentalist has had his tale to tell, and has done it with inspiration and overcoming charm.

It may be an easy exercise of the skeptical understanding to sweep all this long and continuous history into the limbo of the abnormal and hysterical; it may certainly be said that there are sane and reasoned philosophies, whose content differs in no wise from that of the genuine mystical literatures; with the complete discrediting of the mystical, we shall also be obliged to discredit these. It may be that Plato and Hegel and Emerson have dwelt in a vague and hazy

dreamland, and that modern culture and life can have after all in them only an historical interest; but with the disappearance of these from real functioning in the experiences of to-day, shall we also get rid of Dante and Goethe, and sundry other poets and men of letters? The question can only be raised here without any attempt at discussion.

Catherine of Siena, Mystic as she was, had her doubts, but she found a way of meeting them. We quote from her. "I will teach thee," and the Voice in her heart, "how to distinguish My visions from the visions of the enemy. My vision begins with terror, but always, as it grows, gives greater confidence; it begins with some bitterness, but always groweth more sweet. In the vision of the enemy the contrary happens, for in the beginning it seems to bring some gladness, confidence, or sweetness, but, as it proceeds, fear and bitterness grow continuously in the soul of whoso beholds it. But I will give thee another sign more infallible and more certain. Be assured that, since I am Truth, there ever results from My visions a greater knowledge of truth in the soul; and, because the knowledge of truth is most necessary to her about Me and about herself, that is, that she should know Me and know herself, from which knowledge it ever follows that she despises herself and honors Me, which is the proper office of humility, it is inevitable that from My visions the soul becomes more humble, knowing herself, and knowing Me better." This is, of course, the mediaeval method of stating the fact; but even at the present time, the easy and pleasurable way of the physiological analysis with its complicated experimental stations is not an unquestionable one of reaching the truth. Moreover, the speculative results of the visionaries have often found fruitful demonstrations in the realms of history and reality.

The Mystics have been of all grades and varieties; illiterate and cultured, peasant and nobleman, pauper and prince; they have occupied every station in life and performed every sort of labor; they have ploughed the seas and discovered new continents, like Columbus; they have disposed of refractory Parliaments, like Cromwell; they have crowned monarchs against seemingly overwhelming odds, like Jeanne d'Arc; they have transformed a whole world, like Martin Luther. They can, however, be properly divided into three classes, the Quietists, whose lives are given to contemplation, the Voluntarists, who rush into the mad whirl of the world and pluck victory from the jaws of the impossible, and the Intellectualists, who give an account of themselves and develop a psychology of the Mystic consciousness. It seems likely that they will continue to appear in the future as they have done in the past.

Saint Catherine of Siena was the comparatively uneducated daughter of Jacomo and Lapa di Benincasa, simple, earnest people, who did all in their power for the large family with which they were blessed. She was born on the 25th of March, 1347, the feast of the Annunciation, which according to Sienese reckoning was the first day of the new year. Saint Francis of Assisi had died one hundred and twenty years before, and Dante had passed from exile a quarter of a century earlier. Petrarch was then forty-three years old, Boccacio had not yet written the *Decameron,* Chaucer was probably a boy of seven, Charles, King of Bohemia, had been elected Emperor, and Pope Clement VI ruled at Avignon.

Italy was still the "hostelry of sorrows" and the "lady of promises." The cities were in the hands of remorseless tyrants, or, if they pretended to govern themselves, were

subject to internal conflicts and hostile attacks from their neighbors. Hordes of mercenary soldiers held allegiance now under this one and now under that, and gave misrule additional horrors. The moral condition of ruler and citizen was no better than the political; pestilence and disease came with resistless strength and malignity.

Catherine of Siena was to pass into this scene and atmosphere with words of admonition and hands of healing. Her power was shown early; visions floated before her, and her vocation was soon determined. She met with the usual opposition from home and friends, but she went forth undeterred to the fulfillment of her work. She joined the Sisters of Penance of St. Dominic, called in Siena the *Mantellate,* not nuns strictly speaking, but devoted to the service of religion while remaining in their homes. Her life became painfully rigid and austere; her soul was evidently set apart for special labors and duties.

Gradually a body of faithful disciples and adherents gather about her, members of the *Mantellate,* women of culture and noble birth. Then priests, who recognized her right of leadership, and later men and women from every walk in life. Chief among her followers were the Fra Raimondo du Capua, later Master of the Dominicans, who wrote her story, the authentic source of information about her, and Stefano Maconi, the Carthusian, a man of the same mold as herself. The fellowship found ample toil waiting for it. Catherine was a leader and commander; " a wonderfully endowed woman, with an intuition so swift and infallible that men deemed it miraculous, the magic of a personality so winning and irresistible that neither man nor woman could hold out against it, a simple untaught wisdom that confounded the

arts and subtleties of the world; and with these a speech so golden, so full of a mystical eloquence, that her words, whether written or spoken, made all hearts burn within them when her message came. In ecstatic contemplation she passes into regions beyond sense and above reason, voyaging alone in unexplored and untrodden realms of the spirit; but, when the sounds of the earth break in upon her trance, a homely common sense and simple humor are hers, no less than the knowledge acquired in these communings with an unseen world."

Catherine soon entered upon her great tasks. The fellowship at different times occupied different abodes; they grew into a significant power in Siena. Catherine was a preacher of winning charm and singular allurement; she persuaded many into an abandonment of lives that brought forth unwholesome fruits. Siena was torn by feuds and quarrelsome factions, and Catherine was recognized as a mediator, in the internecine quarrels. Not Siena alone was aware that a new spiritual force had arisen in Italy. She was to play a part in the settlement of political disturbances in Milan and Pisa and Lucca and Florence. She begins the series of letters, which continue during the remainder of her days. They contain her hopes and dreams, they exhort priests and potentates to bring about that reformation of Church and State which will give peace and unity to Italy; they voice again the aspirations which make up the political creed of her predecessor, Dante, and which burst forth with renewed vigor in the impassioned demands of her successor, Savonarola.

Into the details of this struggle and this mingled defeat and victory we cannot enter here. She threw herself with

unrestrained ardor into three large projects, a mistaken zeal for another crusade urged by the Pope, the reformation and regeneration of the prelacy, the return of the Pope to Rome from his exile in Avignon. This last had already been fiercely brought to the attention of Gregory XI, by the Swedish Mystic and Prophetess, Birgitta, then residing in Rome. "Unless the Pope," was the message of Birgitta, "comes to Italy in the time and in the year appointed, the lands of the Church, which are now united under his sway and obedience, will be divided in the hands of his enemies."

The difficulties of the time had brought on the bitter war between Florence and the Pope; the cities vacillated between the two; Bernardo Visconti, the sinister tyrant of Milan, gave gloomy counsel and fomented discord; Giovanna, the pleasure-loving and mysterious Queen of Naples, shifted her views and allegiance as her varying caprices dominated her; Catherine with her fellowship was called to Florence, and from there sent to Avignon. This was the crowning labor of her life. The Florentines behaved with wily and astute treachery; the counsellors about the Pope built up every sort of obstacle, palpable and tenuous, between her and the Holy Father; she maintained her spiritual supremacy, held him firm to the purpose, and after incredible tribulations, natural and apparently supernatural, restored the Pope to the Imperial city.

Her great work was done. In the years following and the coming of the schism, when several popes claimed the legitimacy of their election, Catherine espoused the cause of Urban VI. She came to Rome at his invitation, and there, after enduring prolonged and violent suffering, induced perhaps by the austerity of her life, she made the great transi-

tion, surrounded by her unfaltering friends, on April 29, 1380. The analogue of Catherine of Siena in modern times is our own noble and self-sacrificing Jane Addams; both of them, always in the forefront of their respective periods, belong to the inspirers and benefactors who bring the emancipating message, and who achieve the permanent result.

Towards the close of her life Catherine took thought for the written word she was leaving behind her. In the early autumn of 1378 she completed her remarkable book, the *Dialogo* or *Libro della Divina Dottrina.* The volume is a series of Dialogues in which the mystical doctrines of the Saint are unfolded at length, and in which the views presented in Catherine's letters are more fully expounded. The letters number nearly four hundred. These are written to kings and mendicants, saints and sinners, priests and popes. They are done with authority as of one who had the right to speak and give counsel and admonition. When the names of the patriotic lovers of Italy are spoken, no one should forget the name of Catherine of Siena.

POETRY

NO people has been so rude as to be without a rhythmical chant or chorus of some kind, which, even if its form has made it seem like prose, has not had some of the qualities which belong to verse. The northern peoples have sung of their long and terrible winters, and of the heroism which has snatched from the very jaws and grasp of the ice-gods the means of subsistence, and the triumph which has produced the arts of life, and the possibility of a freer and better existence. With the supremacy of the higher will and its establishment securely on the planes of combined human activity, the titanic dynasties of deities have found their twilight, and sunk into their aboriginal places in the dark void and abysm of the conquered and the foredone. The southern peoples, dwelling nearer the light, have avowed their kinship with the morning, and through their poetry shone the radiances of a unity with the eternal, which has ennobled the individual man, and made his destiny a glory, beaming from below the sky across which its triumphant passage is to be made. Everywhere and at all times the spontaneous songs of the peoples have sprung from their innermost hearts, and hope and aspiration have never been left without their melodious utterance. Hymns have everywhere been raised to propitiate deities of terrible aspect, or to give thank offerings to gods whose smile soothed the gloom of human toilings, stern and insistent to achieve a permanent possession of those elements which alone made life worth the living.

Of all the arts, poetry is the most widespread, the most home-bred, the most native to man, the most winning, the most consoling. Master of all the powers and charms which belong to the other arts, poetry is the very sun god who leads the train of the Muses.

The other arts have had their particular periods of fruition and ascendency. The great builders of the Orient and of Egypt have attempted to put into their immense structures the half-evolved thoughts, the vague and mighty dreams, the unanswered questions, which dominated their lives and fascinated them with glimpses of spiritual realms not yet securedly occupied by humanity. The perfection of human individuality, the serene possession of self-poised, self-equal manhood, the gracious and exquisite union of life and nature, the bodily beauty, an exact and finished representation of the soul, found in Greek sculpture the perfect art which, as Lowell says, 'is the one thing finished in this hasty world.' The mysterious ecstasies of monk and saint, the revelation of a deeper and more real world within and without this exterior one of touch and sight, the sufferings of the God-head agonizing for the safety and return to himself of his wandering and desolate children, the opulence of love and glory flooding the heavens, which yearn to receive the restored and transfigured into its rest and calm, make a many-colored pageant of splendor in the painting of the Middle Ages. Even Music in its heights and successes has a special period and almost a special people and country; it had to wait until the present age, when the feeling of unity between the race and the Divine became so profound that its notes of exultation have built themselves into a pleasure house, where the voice of pain and grief, in discords lost and dis-

sipated around the prevailing harmony, sounds only as a reminiscence of a conflict waged to a victorious issue, hardly touched any more with the pathos of regret. But poetry has not been confined to any age or country; it has reached its meridian again and again side by side with the other arts; what they have said, it has sung with freer cadence, with truer insight, with fuller revelation.

Poetry possesses thus a sort of universality in which the other arts are lacking. It appears to be more akin to the thought which embodies itself in it, and to share that thought's power and omnipresence. Wherever insight has penetrated to those depths where dwell the mysterious Mothers whom Faust was obliged to find before the world lay explained before him, wherever discovery has touched those truths which make the maze of this visible scene an order and a whole, wherever reason has found itself as the solvent word and beneficent substance of all, poetry in the first delight of the illumination accorded has arisen to voice the triumphant achievement. While the other arts are more or less localized, and have submitted to various temporal conditions, poetry has had the entire globe for its own, and the complete expanse of the ages for the field of its development.

Indeed, poetry transcends the whole of space and time. As Emerson says, all songs have been written before time was, and the poet penetrates to the regions where they forever are, and brings thence what he hears and can remember. The poet reaches the eternal and necessary, and the material from which he constructs his visions partakes of that necessity and eternity. Even language, itself a product of mind and throughout reflecting the processes of thought, is more exterior to the life sought to be expressed than the

image which the poet uses, and in which that thought is made to shine forth. The image is itself spiritual, contained within the current of the spirit's movements, and lifts the art which uses it as its plastic embodiment above any subservience to the outer sphere. The poet dwells in the world of images; these are already more or less generalized reproductions of the scene that environs humanity; these are the reeds in which the fire of thought is carried from nation to nation. His art therefore occupies a plane which has transformed the sensuous into the spiritual, which unfolds the beauty resident in mind alone.

Again each of the other arts has limits which it is perilous for it to overleap. The noblest cathedrals can but suggest thought; sculpture reproduces the heroic and supreme individual; painting portrays that one moment of an action in which culminate all its elements, the union of its presuppositions and the beginning of the catastrophe; music works its wonders through the indirect medium of the emotions; but the poet has for his province the entire reach of life; there is nothing which it is not given him to express; movement, thought, past, the to-come, picture, song, all are his to weave into his combinations, and to make of them what he intends. His art is thus an infinite one, and whatever limits it has, they are such as he freely sets and freely uses. As Matthew Arnold, comparing the poet with other artists, says:

> "For ah! he has so much to do!
> Be painter and musician too!
> The aspect of the moment show,
> The feeling of the moment know!
> The aspect not, I grant, express,
> Clear as the painter's art can dress,

The feeling not, I grant, explore
So deep as the musician's lore, —
But clear as words can make revealing,
And deep as words can follow feeling.
But ah! then comes his sorest spell
Of toil! he must life's movement tell!
The thread which binds it all in one,
And not its separate parts alone!
The movement he must tell of life,
Its pain and pleasure, rest and strife!
His eye must travel down at full,
The long unpausing spectacle;
With faithful unrelaxing force,
Attend it from its primal source;
From change to change and year to year,
Attend it in its mid career,
Attend it to the last repose,
And solemn silence at its close."

The imagination is a genuine meeting ground of all the powers which constitute the man. The sensuous world reappears there in much of its complexity and differenced life. The experiences of the poet need to be of the widest in order that this inner reproduction of the multiform world may be as rich in combinations and fertile in new growths as the exterior and real one. The wider the range of his excursions, the larger the realm of images within him, the nobler will be the work which he is competent to do. But the imagination with its stores of figures and their relations is a free world. In the scene before the artist, the real scene out there, the mind of the perceiver must yield itself to the relations visible before it. The constructive process which builds up in the soul the mountain and stream and valley and sky is brought into the limits which nature has made, and must

give itself up to them if it wishes to know them. There is here an element of constraint, an authoritativeness imposed upon the spirit from without, a temporary abnegation of freedom.

Not so with the region of the imagination and its sceneries and denizens. They are the creation of the free spirit, and possess the attributes which belong to that freedom. They are particular events or times or places or persons, but they bear upon them the impress of the freedom which created them. As such, they are no longer mere creations standing side by side with other similar concretions in a realm of hard fact, but they are a fluctuant, moving life, through which freedom is reflected in every detail and change. They are freedom, so to speak, made sensible. They are what nature must be to the thought which created it, and which sees it as flowing forth from its free activity. If one ventured a bold flight, one might perhaps say that the science of the world and its poetry would ultimately coincide, that the great poem of the universe would be so wholly and truly reflected in the verse of the singer that the creative processes would appear in it as they indeed are.

In the imagination the universality and the particularity of man come to fruitful nuptials. It is like the enchanted island of *The Tempest,* nay, it is that enchanted island in which the voices of the spirit are heard everywhere, and the individual man becomes conscious of deeps upon deeps within him. Hence the imagination is the constant maker of symbols. Aristotle has called man the mimetic or symbol-making animal; I suppose he meant that he was the fashioner of images, which in their limitedness contained the widest significance, which were hints or indexes of myriad mean-

ings behind and beyond them. Thus every figure built up by the imagination, however rich may be its special content, and however varied may be the relations in which it is placed, becomes a generalized representation of the problem or collision for which it stands or in which it is involved, becomes a symbol of activities which transcend time and space.

The whole art of the poet plays in this region of symbol. Through the gateway of words he leads us into its labyrinth, and, if we wish to follow his wanderings, we must give ourselves to that free creation of land and sea and men which is the condition and possibility of his labors. The unity of all these labors is to be found in the thought of freedom. Here is no heavy and intractable material to be hewn into abstract representations of personality; no deceptive canvas on which depth and softness are achieved by a *tour de force* of the artist; no enswathement in a succession of emotions which are universality only in its immediacy; in its large consciousness of itself without the background of detail to make clear what in truth is; but everything is the production of free spirit, freedom is the living creator, and is seen to be the truth from which the all has come, and into which it returns.

But the imagination is not an individual possession, and its creations are not the isolated things which belong to one man, and have their sole interest in the revelation which they make of the idiosyncrasies of a certain person, having such and such a place in the world. Prevalent criticism seems to find its chief function in discovering those elements in works of art which show forth their purely phenomenal side, but it is more worthy of an intelligence, itself the real presupposition of the world, to discover relations to that intelligence. The imagination of the race is a whole, and the entire

range of thought and emotion is contained in it. The world of beauty is the whole world, so disclosed as to make its manifestation a harmony like unto itself, a shrine, a splendor, a glory, as Plato says, of the Self-moved One.

The thinking of the race has passed through its imaginative stage. It has only been after long and heavy labors that the power of thought has emerged into clearness, and gained command of its resources in their purity. The release from the domination of the image has only been made with difficulty, and the free use of the image in art has also been one of the long-deferred and late achievements. The imaginative thinking, or rather the thinking through representations, gave rise to the mythologies of the world, and they are the heroic efforts of mankind to recognize the fullness of its being through the medium of picture and symbol. With the advance into the height of pure thinking, the mythologies and wonder-tales remain a treasure house of emblems in which the deepest aspirations, the noblest fore-illuminations, the highest intentions have, so to speak, concreted themselves. These are, therefore, not individual embodiments of the idea, whose translation might be a task of some difficulty to a person other than its maker, but the forms in which the race has told its own story to itself, a treasure house, as it were, into which all may go, and which all may own. It is here that the great artist finds his best material. One must not understand that this making of forms which shall serve as mediums for the transmission of the artistic thought has ever ceased. It is going on now as it has always been going on. We no longer make mythologies, — that belonged to the youth of the race, as we have reached the soberer period of approaching maturity, — but we constantly make tales

which seize the general consciousness, and after a prolonged transformation are adapted to the need intended to be subserved by them. One has only to study the history of the Faust legend to see how it was hewn into shape by generation after generation to become at last the vehicle for the greatest among the moderns; or watch the resurgence of the Nibelung story into the consciousness of the time, weaving for itself a garment of supernatural melodies, which ear had before not heard.

This realm of world-images belongs to all artists, and from it painting and music and the rest take what belongs to them, for the whole of this realm belongs to each, and the new growths there may be plucked by whoever can bind them into new garlands. The one and the many are here supremely one in a life which includes both. The poet, however, is native here; he is the imagination which has evoked the land itself, and the source of its fertility. He is of imagination all compact; he does not, however, give merely " to airy nothings a local habitation and a name "; he gives color and light and a home to whatever is best and truest; his eye does not roll in a fine frenzy, but he works in a sad sincerity from which he has no desire to free himself because it is the very spirit in which all high work must be done.

The whole gold and bejeweled panoply, in which poetry is clad, the interwoven blaze of mataphor and simile and allegory, are only lighter efforts of the same creative power. About the figure or scene evoked by the poet plays the flickering light of a fancy which reproduces in lessening depth the idea, thus given an investiture which is in truth royal. The metaphor has a singular efficacy and charm; the trope,

by uniting in one image two widely differenced thoughts, intimates a unity underlying both, and points to that unity which underlies all. The whole realm becomes thus, as it were, a marvelous world of echoes; each utterance brings with it a host of deeper connections, and a music is the effect which is the very song of the whole. The idea penetrates every smallest atom of the material used in the structure; what is so difficult to see in the vast concretions of nature becomes here plain and clear, and the visible and tangible float in the medium of a transfiguring thought.

The poet is, therefore, one of those great personalities in which the entire potency of the time reveals and completes itself. He belongs to those forces which enlarge the world as we know it, and give it an outlook further and beyond. The conditions for his appearance are manifold, and they need all to be fulfilled, if he is to do his work successfully. Singers we have always with us; they have greater or lesser insights, and lift the veil from a mystery here and there; they may recall us to a belief in many a high truth from whose allegiance we have been wandering, or awaken in us again feelings whose fire has been smoldering under a forgetfulness induced by an occupation with many affairs. These constitute always a reminder that the real has another deeper side, that life has a within as well as a without, that truth is more than appearance, that the dream is sometimes better than the thing.

These are poets, and they may have a genuine part in the play of eternity, small, it may be, but worthy; but the poet comes only at those intervals when the world sums itself in a great recognition of its whole life, spiritual and temporal, and he is, with others, his fellows and his peers, the eye that

sees and the voice that tells the story in the way given to him. He is one of the ways in which man, the generic man, comes to an understanding of himself. His thought must therefore be the dominant influence of the age in which he flourishes; that age must be the organ of great and far reaching purposes; in it must culminate many thought tendencies, and in it must arise the morning red of newer revelations. The progress of mankind has led up to him, and he consummates that progress in his poem.

His relation to the world is therefore dual. Toward the past he occupies the position of a focus in which all rays converge; of the future he is the beginner. He stands side by side with the philosopher, the prophet, the weilder of affairs, in the fashioning of the to-come. The age of miracles is not to be relegated to some single epoch in history; it is the ever-present fact which meets us everywhere; a word, a song, a poem, transforms, as it always did, the face of affairs, gives eye to the blind, feeds the great multitude, awakens the dead. It is just as true to-day as it ever was that no accent of the Holy Ghost is lost, however heedless may seem the generation hurling its way through the corridors of life. Shakespeare is the world's poet because the whole world is in him, and every man finds on that liberal stage himself, his neighbor, and all that belongs to them.

What poetry thus expresses is the deepest idea, and that idea in forms which it has made for itself. The whole art is transparent spirit throughout; some deep emotion, some large understanding, some refiguration of great actions, assume in it a garb which is only themselves freely externalized. There prevail therefore unity, relation, organization throughout; at the center is a reconstitution of thought, and

it develops itself in every member of the representation. These members may unfold into a completeness which is a relative independence, but their independence dwells in reality in their complete reflection of the central sentiment. In a great play every character is great; there is a fullness of individuality even in the so-called minor parts, which make them the center often of a play within the play. These independencies, however, unite in the general action which includes and permeates the whole.

The soul of poetry is in its creative idea; its body is the image and melody. Music, like the other arts, brings its tribute to this sovereign. Its pomp and charm accompany the march of the poetical eventualities. Rhythm, sonorousness, melody, belong to the realm of enchantment. They are part of the robe which the art wears so royally. The appearance of rhyme, whether initial or final, alliteration or end-syllable, points again to the oneness which makes the poem; that oneness shows itself in these extraneous details as the life of a tree in its slightest leaf. The dependence of rhythm upon the recurrence of accented syllables throws the identity of the poem up before the thought inasmuch as the significant syllable is ordinarily the accented one. The action reflects itself anew in the succession of syllables receiving the greater stress of the voice.

The prose romance shows the same free tendency in the use of its materials as the poem. The mediaeval romances introduce the reader into a maze of commingled scenes and actions. It is sometimes said that the demands of verse, especially in their elaborated and later forms, which bring into play all the resources of a complex and many-keyed instrument, fetter the freedom of the poet, and the use of a less

artificial medium would leave him with his eyes more surely fixed on his subject, and he would not be distracted by the need of fulfilling requirements apparently antagonistic, any one of which alone presents great difficulties. It may be said that the true poet wears his shackles lightly, and finds in the form such a return of the thought of the poem upon itself as strengthens the inspiration.

The modern novel sprang from the romance by dropping out of its domain the marvelous element, and discovering in the daily and actual, elements of beauty and sublimity which had been once thought to belong solely to achievements mediated by gods or creatures possessing superhuman powers. The gods, while remaining on high, have yet been found eager to descend and dwell in the heart of man, and partake of his domestic cheer by the simple winter fireside. But the romance and the novel differ from the poem in their lack of unity; they penetrate into the infinite recesses of human hopes and aspirations, and bring thence rich freights of precious insights; they bind these together after all only in a more or less external fashion; they are essentially analytic; they deal with the parts; the poem is essentially one; it deals with the whole.

Poetry has followed in its various progresses the method of history; it has gone from an absorption in the objective world to a comprehensive of a unity of the world within and the world without. In every nation its poetry begins with long narrative poems, and poetry shows again the passage from subservience to the external to a recognition of free internality as the source and end of all. The heroic age required indeed the efforts of giants and the constant interposition of supernatural powers to assure victory to the sore-beset and nascent

manhood of the race. The labors of a Herakles or a Theseus were more than needed in the primitive conquest of nature and the upbuilding of institutions. They were the bearers of the idea of the world, and their deeds were the salvation of mankind.

A distinction must be made between narrative poems, however elaborate and finished, and the true epic. The former are to be found in indefinite number among all peoples of high culture, among whom the arts belong to the graceful amenities of life. They are reflective representations of great periods, and have often a deep and real content, but the true epic belongs to the evolution of the race, and appears at the turning points of events. They are scattered down the ages, and their authors are the heroes of poetry. Their content is a great national enterprise which is at the same time a world enterprise; for the time the particular nation has concentrated in itself the hope that is looking forward to the next great event in the realization of the destiny of the race.

In the great epic poems the heavens are opened; the gods or God are part of the powers that bring forth the issue; in the artificial epic these appear only as a sort of convenient machinery which operates at uncertain although important junctures. In the real epic the temporal world is encircled by the eternal, the occurrences transpire in heaven, before they enroll themselves on earth. In the epic all events appear as belonging to a system which is under the direction and dominance of supernatural powers. The connection between the earth and what is above the earth is open, and messengers descend and ascend on the skyey pathway to intermediate in the affairs of men.

But in this way the true life of man is placed outside of himself; after all, he has no substantial ground in himself; what he is, and what he may become, blazes up there in glorious effulgence, but it is yet external to himself. Great as are his deeds, heroic as is his character, unparalleled as is his bravery, they are all reflections of an activity nobler than his own, and dominating him from without. A fatality after all overshadows the epic; a fatality of freedom, for the gods are free, but a fatality nevertheless. The gods must descend from their seats on high, and take up their abodes in the minds and hearts of men, building up there a freedom corresponsive to their own, abnegating themselves at any cost, and giving to the man an independence like unto their own. This freedom or subjectivity reveals itself in the lyric. Aspiration, longings, passion, revolt, find here their expression. The unrestraint of the soul revelling in its sense of superiority to all limits, or in its power to make its own limits, surges in outbursts of song. Caprice pours forth the delight in its own infinitude. The consciousness of the soul that it has within itself a region which is created by itself, that in opposition to the bondage which life perforce would have it submit itself unto, it holds the secret of a larger being, in which there is nothing that is not the result of its own action, throws itself into fierce and overflowing expression. The consciousness may display itself as negative to the established and the institutional and place the demand for freedom in the boldest and most exaggerated aspect.

But the truest lyrics are not negative; the recognition in them is made of the unity of the individual soul with the soul of the world, and this theme is sung in the most varied accents and under the color of the most diverse moods. The

songs which spring up among the peoples — who shall say how — are expressive of the truest national life; no poet seems to be their author; the whole nation has given itself utterance in them. The religious longings, the deepest and most sincere, clothe themselves in the lyric garb. At great crises in history, the patriotism of the poet, which is also the general patriotism of the time, puts on its singing robes, and the melodies thus born have become a heritage noble, inspiring, priceless.

The cultivated lyric knows that the entirety of subjectivity is its province, and also that under cover of an individual mood it holds a universal content. It recognizes itself as the mouthpiece, the instrument, of the pervasive emotion, and its special tone becomes part of the form which it uses. In a prosaic and scientific age, it may recall a halting generation back to those deeper apprehensions which are the genuine trend of life. The lyric revels in the utmost play with its material, devises new rhythmic modes with curious avidity, usurps the musician's privilege of the discovery of ever new and exquisite melodies. The epic moves on with its slow and stately tread or rushes like a cataract over its precipice, but remains within the rich possibilities of a single metric form; the lyric in its form is as differenced as its moods, and obeys only that inner law of harmony without which a poem would cease to be a poem.

In the drama the subjective and the objective confront each other and proceed to their reconciliation. The drama must have a thoroughly wrought out plot like the epic, but each character appears in it charged with an internality that seeks to impose itself on the others. There ought to be no *deus ex machina* who is to appear on the scene of action

when the knot requires loosening. If the gods appear, they are themselves a part of a purpose, which is no doubt themselves, but which they do not seek to impose on the antagonists. If destiny or fate still hovers in the background, the drama has not yet fully emancipated itself from the domination of the earlier poetry; it still has an epical tendency from which it will ultimately purify itself.

The drama appears invariably to have arisen in connection with religious ceremonies and in its earlier forms to have partaken of their solemnity. The great heroes of the national mythologies have been the figures most frequently standing forth in the earlier plays, and to have been the representatives of great principles for which the sacrifice of life was freely given. The collision portrayed was between two views of life, each asserting its infinitude, and consequent absolute justification, and leading in the denouement to the supremacy of the higher. Characters appeared majestic, grand, somewhat generalized. Gradually a secularization, so to speak, takes place; the characters lose somewhat of their remoteness, and become more akin to those we met in our daily life; they develop a deeper inwardness and a more pronounced individuality; they are more themselves and less the mere carriers of ideas which include far more than themselves.

In comedy is found, of course, a collision which in one sense is no collision; at least in the end it shows itself to have been based on an illusion, which, being removed, all things fall into their places, and harmony is restored; or it contrasts two world-views, the inadequacy of both or one of which is displayed in the various contradictions and follies to which it leads. The illusion which it portrays may in-

deed be a very profound one, and the action may verge on the delineation of discords that approach the tragic, but the clearing up at the end shows that the trials and worriments have indeed been much ado about nothing, or a taking of things as one likes them rather than as they are. The mistake of the individual or the nation in taking that for reality which is not so, needs the laughter of the comic portrayal, or the fierce mirth of the satirist, to dissipate its fumes and restore the atmosphere into those clearer conditions wherein the sight may behold the object as it is.

But the collision of fundamental principles, both of which must be held if the whole truth is to be discovered or acted forth on the stage prepared for it, demands something deeper for its solution; the clearer these verities are seen, the profounder becomes the allegiance to them and the more imperative the call for the supreme sacrifice; if no mediation can be found for them, if no higher and more organic verity continent of them both can be discovered, if they are seen simply in the relation of higher and lower, the bearer of the lesser thought perishes in the establishment of the higher. Or the subjectivity of the individual may place him in antagonism with the movement of things around him, with that tendency in the world which may be called its necessary movement; if he cannot adjust himself thereto, if he remains irreconcilably outside of what is essential, his disappearance from the scene of action cannot but ensue.

But the meaning of the modern world is mediation; more and more we are learning that there are no irreconcilable contradictions; that opposition itself is only a means by which a fuller development is attained; these oppositions are real, and their force and extent must not be diminished

by any easy and light-hearted attempt to make them synonymous with the illusory; life is not a light-hearted comedy, but it assuredly is not a tragedy. The drama which recognizes the depth and validity of moral antagonisms, which will not minimize the distinction between the life natural and the life spiritual, which knows the intensity of the conflict and comes to its triumph with the marks of the struggle upon it, but which yet holds above the fiercest of the peril the illumination of a unifying idea, and which in the end brings both antagonists safe and ennobled into a wider life than they knew before, is the work of the modern world. Tragedy belongs to the past; and ever since the thirteenth century life has been a profound and divine comedy, whose termination, while in the beatific vision, has yet a phenomenal existence in all the realms of the world where work is to be done for our fellows.

The poetic realm is the unfolding of man in his completeness; his highest aims, his noblest aspirations, his deepest thoughts, his conflicts, his victories, are all there; nature in all her splendor is there, her loveliest landscapes, her most suggestive scenes. There is nothing in the soul of man which has not received an irradiation from the poetic setting given it by the one who felt it most deeply and knew it most adequately. But the poet looks beyond the visible and the temporal; he looks beyond even the very highest of thought and emotion that have been reached in his age; he has ever been called a prophet or seer, and he may in truth be said to occupy so high a situation; he perceives the light from below the horizon; he forecasts the events, the realizations that are to be. His home is in the Idea-of-the-World, and he is the messenger of its next great incarnation. He sums up what

has been, and relates what is to be; he is the legislator of the future.

The world of the poet is the ideal world, but that is only to say that it is the real world. He delineates not so much what is, as what ought to be; if one cannot find in the outer what he depicts, it is only because the outer with all its mighty effort and strain does not quite reach what it strives for. In this region of the imagination the unachieved is done, the height climbed which appeared so difficult, the contradiction solved which wore so forbidding a face. The poetic life, which he who reads and understands must make his own, is in that complete Idea-of-the-Whole which is its true being, which underlies and controls it, which shapes all being and thought to its own high standard, and brings everything with which it deals into conformity with the perfect, its truth and essence.

The beauty with which the poet is ravished is thus no particular beauty, it is the beauty of the all, it is that glory which the absolute wears as its fit and perfect expression, which, while a robe, yet is itself throughout a life, and so reflects the infinite truth as to be completely one with it. As Diotima said to Socrates: " But what if man had eyes to see the true beauty — the divine beauty, I mean, pure and clear and unalloyed, not clogged with the pollutions of mortality, and all the colors and vanities of human life — thither looking, and holding converse with the true beauty, divine and simple, and bringing into being and educating true creations of virtue and not idols only? Do you not see that in that communion only, beholding beauty with the eye of the mind, he will be enabled to bring forth, not images of beauty, but realities, for he has hold not of an image but a reality,

and, bringing forth and educating true virtue, to become the friend of God, and be immortal, if mortal man may? Would that be an ignoble life?"

The poet is the great namer; his appellatives are permanent; where scientist and philosopher grope, he is at once at the goal; when the other work of time in which he has appeared is obsolete and dead, his verses are fresh as the morning and as joyous as the spring. The science of Greece is a mere shadow; even her philosophies have been merged in greater and fuller thought; but Homer and Aeschylus can never lose their strength and splendor, and Emerson says of the poet that he is:

> "A brother of the world, his song
> Sounded like a tempest strong,
> Which tore from oaks their branches broad,
> And stars from the ecliptic road.
> Time wore he as his clothing-weeds,
> He sowed the sun and stars for seeds."

THE MODERN REALISTIC MOVEMENT

THE old battle, which has appeared in so many shapes, is fought again in our own time. Probably it has engaged the courage and the bravery of the best men and women in every time. Each age, it seems, must win the victory for itself. Error has a thousand forms, and one has only been fairly disposed of, before another takes its place, more active than any of its predecessors. The negative we have always with us, and our life consists in its just and continuous negation. When we have built for ourselves one pleasure house, in which we hope permanently to dwell, we find before long that it is altogether too narrow, and we discover that we only make limits for ourselves in order to transcend them.

> "The old order changeth, yielding place to new,
> And God fulfills himself in many ways,
> Lest one good custom should corrupt the world."

The conflict between the Classicists and the Romanticists is over; we can see now that on the one side was a Classicism that was not classic, and on the other was a Romanticism that was not romantic. Meanwhile true art pursued the even tenor of its way, and produced works which serenely took their places in the memory and the reverence of the race. It was learned that art must be classic, inasmuch as it must have as its basis a unifying idea, which gives meaning and dignity to its every part; and it may be romantic, inasmuch as all these parts are susceptible of a fullness of development which

makes them complete reflections of the unifying idea. It must be classic inasmuch as it displays the objective thought of the world as the genuine medium in which all life dwells, and it may be romantic in showing how the objective thought is mirrored and reproduced in the variant subjectivity of mankind.

The battle to-day has assumed a different form, but it is much the same as it formerly was. According to immemorial custom, the great works of the past are brought in review, and they are irredeemably condemned. They were good enough for the immature days which brought them forth, but for us they no longer are as pregnant with significance as the later and more glowing successes of to-day. Even Shakespeare trembles on his throne, and he will soon, if prevalent modes of thought continue, be quite willing to resign into any contemporary hands that are content to take them, the unsatisfactory and extravagant plays to which he has so long and so obstinately laid claim. It has been over and over again proven that Goethe knew nothing about the right way to make a successful novel, that in some of his tales he constructed mystifications, which were not art, for art is always clear, and that in the second part of Faust he indulged in fancies and vagaries which might be allowed a great poet in his old age, but which exhibit both the garrulity and the insecurity of that time of life.

The demand nowadays is for reality, the representation of life just as it is, the reproduction in picture and prose of the things which we see all around us, the color of them, the stains on them, the odors of them, the commonplace speech of them. Poetry is yet tolerated in a measure, but there are hints of its nearing decease, and its artificiality, so-called,

is a strong argument against it. The average world of mankind has made its insurrection into literature, and the high and mighty personages of the past are receding into the vagueness of stars disappearing into the increasing light of the morning. The ordinary man, with his ordinary hopes and wants and desires, requires a portrayal, and is to receive it in the ordinary fashion; one distinguished novelist of the day says that he will put a perfect man or woman into his pages when he finds one; until then he is content to depict such mixtures as he knows and meets. The courage of the movement would be very small if it did not go as far as it could, and hence not only the ordinary man is to have his day of triumphant description, but the lowest stratum must give up its secrets for the behoof and instruction of the race. We have the rowdy, as he really is, the Magdalen in her various stages to her inevitable end, the noisomeness that one knows is a problem with which the progress of life must deal, but whose full-length picture, for its own sake, on the walls of art, suggests a number of questions as to where it properly belongs, and what end its making after this manner subserves.

The movement is toward reality, toward the accumulation of infinite details, toward the descent into the multiplicity of particularity. Everything is in itself worthy of being a subject of art, literary or other, and the main question often is only in regard to the execution or success of the picture. One writer, indeed, says that there are favorite themes among the masters of so-called realism which he would not touch with a forty-foot pole, but at the same time he defends them, inveighs against the exclusiveness of those who would prefer to see them relegated to their proper abiding places, and im-

plies that literature need not be overnice about the facts which the providence of the world is willing to have come into existence, and whose relative persistency and marvelous fecundity give them a preëminence over others that are less pugnacious and insistent and widespread.

One naturally asks what is meant by this reality so pertinaciously thrust into view, and so heralded as the all of existence, and the aim of portrayal. The ideal is, of course, the not-real, from this point of view; it is the fantastical, which may give pleasure to children, although they too are to be deprived of their fairy-tales and nursery-rhymes, but makes no appeal to maturity, which listens to the sad and solemn music of humanity, and shows its greater and higher intellectual reach and strength by its satisfaction with the plain, unembellished fact. What then is reality? What is the fact, on which observation is keeping an eye fixed and acute, and which has for the first time in all the centuries found for itself an entrance into the great world of letters, and which, having at last penetrated into the sacred precincts, is prepared to make war upon the present occupants, drive them from their place of supremacy, and make itself permanently the master of the whole realm?

Inasmuch as all ideal elements are to be strictly excluded from this reality, inasmuch as to put into it thoughts derived from the artist's consciousness is to give it a hue which is not its own, but something foreign to it, inasmuch as it is to be seen and described in itself alone and just as it is, it is rather difficult to make out exactly what it is unless it be the fleeting succession of mere sense impressions, which we greet as old friends, whom we have met before with their claims to be the beginning and the end of all. And this conclusion

is strengthened by the prevalent type of criticism and the character of the work which emanates from some at least of the toilers in the realistic field. The object is the thing which we are after; the impression of the moment is the hard game which we are trying to bag. The way in which we are affected by what we hear and see, is the purport of the delineation. The real thing is a procession of single sensations fleeting across the consciousness, and if we are to be modern and true, we must not allow any fancies or notions of our own to intervene between the object and its reproduction. We must represent it just as it appears to us.

It does not appear that this is too extreme a statement of the attitude assumed by one section of the realists, and their work follows their principles as far as it may. The hopelessness of attempting to seize such abstractions as mere sensations, ought to be clear without much examination; the perceiver is in relation to the sensation, and what he is makes a great difference in the latter; no two people see the same thing in the same way. What we get, therefore, by the effort to hold and reproduce the sensation is not the reality at all, but a series of empty vagaries, which are hardly susceptible of transference from one consciousness to another. The trivial, the childish, the weakly sentimental, the fantastical, are the sole content of art or poetry of this kind, and the realist finds himself at last by a curious process left stranded on the very shore which he has so vehemently sought to escape; he finds himself forced to a sort of work which is as far removed from reality as it can be, which is purely and exclusively the product of his finite brain; and has no objective validity whatever, and no real significance for anybody.

Or he may take the elastic substance of his sensation and

stretch it over the whole universe; in doing so the differences in sensation are of course obliterated, and we have one even, widespreading, colorless, and emotionless emotion in which all life is swallowed as the ripples disappear in the omnipresence of the sea. We get a sensational pantheism which has such great attraction for certain phases of the poetical consciousness, and in which, as in a dark night, all faces are alike and all character dissipated in a meaningless sameness. Or we may take even the step further, and, removing the last vestige of difference clinging to the fabric, find ourselves in the indescribable presence of the great inane, the vast Unknowable, to which hymns of praise must indeed seem the very extravagance of self-contradiction. This is a razor's edge on which no intelligence can balance itself very long, and the inherent nugatoriness of the process forces effort on to something more valid and concrete.

The position of the impressionist in literature is thus strictly an untenable one. He must perforce grow weary of the repetition of productions which are empty of content as far as may be, and he finds himself at last with only the form of his art to manipulate for all his pains. The technical side of his labors asserts an extraordinary preëminence, and he may discover new complications of tones and novel combinations of rhythm, but the whole is empty, and becomes in the end a weariness and a vexation. He may proceed to study the achievements of the past, and with careful and painstaking art, restore measures which have been more or less forgotten; but, inasmuch as the spirit which made these measures is wholly lacking, and his interest in them consists altogether in their formal structure, the result is again a rather profitless failure. He may tell stories in the

manner of Chaucer, or write plays in imitation of the Townsley mysteries, or assiduously bring to light the exterior peculiarities of Euripides, but he is still only the "empty singer of an idle day."

The insidious ideal, like nature when driven out with a fork, persists in running back, and finds somewhere a postern left uncared for, and enters in again with her transforming potency in full endeavor and strength. Thought proceeds to put the world into shape and order. There is something like a systematic procedure in things; affairs follow each other in a more or less natural way, and hang together in bringing forth results more or less permanent. Science discovers manifold relations between phenomena and essays to reduce them to unity. They are all manifestations of one force, which, while itself inapprehensible, blossoms as it were into constant exhibitions of itself. The mind of man is only one of these exhibitions, closely connected with all the rest, and as destitute of permanence as any other of them. Heredity, environment, a host of external conditions, make every man what he is, and to depict him truly we must give all these conditions, and show him in them as a bubble that seams to spring from the surface of an infinite rush of waters, and which, by an irresponsible, more energetic gust, is thrust back into the sameness from which it emerged.

The realist in expressing this theme has a number of alternatives before him, and his choice among them will be in the main determined by his special mental bent. It would be perhaps superfluous to remind him that, as his point of view has thus been selected purely as an individual caprice of his finite organization, it has not much right to

claim for itself the privilege of being "real" in the sense of objective; it is again a specific turn of his own mind, in its limited aspect, an attitude towards reality, which it is his pleasure to cultivate, but which does not necessarily belong to the race, and need not have great value for it.

But he has a number of alternatives, and, as to establish a criterion by which to judge them, were once more to introduce upon the scene the banished ideal, it is strictly indifferent which one of them he devotes himself to and makes the mistress of his art and labors.

He may give himself up to beauty and culture as he understands them. He may find the work-a-day aspect of the world repellent, and fly to Africa or the Tropics to save him from contact with the bitter necessities. Under warmer skies and amid a luxury of forest and a wildness of sea not native to him, he can find much to describe, and thus satiate himself with reality. There is nothing in life worth believing in; a cultivated mind holds itself in supreme abeyance from the settlement of any of the disputes which vex the soul of lesser men; religion and morality are only mental attitudes, into which one may sometimes fall for the sake of the sensations which arise therefrom, but the enlightened and clear sighted are fully aware that a receptivity toward the outer, complete and exquisite, is the one true course. The faith of the past is impossible to us; there is, in fact, nothing to believe in, and to believe puts bonds upon the spirit, and shuts it up in a prison-house which itself has made. If it were possible to go back to the youth of the world, when there were no disagreeable contradictions to be met, when life and nature were in delightful accord, and the ugly "ought" had not dinned its monotony in men's ears, one might recover

the lost happiness. That clearly cannot be, but at least we can have the changing aspects of physical beauty, and the refinements of an artificial culture, which is real because we feel it, and is the more perfect the less we think about it.

The busy world is, however, but little influenced by these gentle persuasions; it is rather inclined to look upon all this as morbid, and demanding the service of the expert in neurology more than literary critic or pleased reader. It sees very well that this superb refinement of sensation rests upon a solid foundation of groaning labor somewhere, and that it cannot be except as a frail and somewhat unimportant blossom in a garden given up to hardier plants, most of which are needed for more humble and useful purposes. It understands that such productions rest upon the weakest of abstractions, and touch reality but with the tip of the little finger. A monotony of pleasure is no pleasure at all, and eventuates in securing the extreme of its own opposite, and Tennyson's heroine in his *Palace of Art* after an experience of these marvelous delights, quite apart from any associations with the mean or vulgar, exclaims truly:

> "I am on fire within!
> There comes no murmur of reply,
> What is it that will take away my sin,
> And save me lest I die?"

Also the determination not to be other than fleetingly and capriciously determined is itself a determination which must be held as fleetingly and capriciously as any other, and by its own force and movement must lead to a purpose deeper and larger than itself.

Perhaps we can find that deeper and larger purpose in

some of the conclusions which Science so freely and lavishly holds out to us. That young giant has been wandering all over the earth and digging deep into its bowels and recesses; it has turned its huge and telescope-spectacled eyes upon the skies and as in a mighty volume made by — shall we say God, or the Unknowable? — it has found written everywhere in unmistakable characters the same legend; it has repeatedly and with increasing cogency found the purport of Nature's hieroglyphs to be the same everywhere — in stars and suns, in the earth and air. The necessity of law, mechanical necessity, the unalterable procession of phenomena, their fixed and unchangeable order, glooms in letters of darkness wherever you may choose to look and ponder. Is the mind of man to escape from the inclusiveness of this final and destroying judgment? Not by any means. The experimentalists come with their measurements and dissections of nerves and brains, dead or alive, and the conclusion is pressed to the uttermost. The freedom of intelligence is swept into the abyss, and the mechanical relation of the outer and inner, the dependence of the subject on the object, is part of the all-embracing theory. We have not been able to rest satisfied with the succession of cultivated delights in which we had hoped to remain permanently, and we may try now the delineation of a world in which reigns inflexible law, in which every event is strictly conditioned by all those preceding it, in which spontaneity or liberty is not to be found anywhere, and in which the mind of man appears as an unimportant link in a series that in its endlessness will ultimately leave him behind, as it has already done vast and extraordinary productions in the past.

The magnitude of the portrayal now proposed might well

give us pause. We are in the region of the unending multiformity of the universe, and one fact asserts its importance as much as the other. Nothing is to be left out or an important link in the chain may be missing. The manifold details explain each other, and we have neither right nor inclination to neglect any one. The canvass must be extended indefinitely; the accumulation of material, the patient study of changing conditions, the minute elaboration of every particular, deserve our admiration and praise. The whole of nature and the entire range of society display themselves before us. Generation after generation steps on the stage, goes through its part in the vast drama, and the result is carried forward. Peace and war, love and hate, fanaticisms of varying kinds and degrees, socialistic tumult, pass in procession and recede to give place to other scenes and action like unto these.

I suppose we have the right to ask, what does it all mean? Is it anything more than a mere succession of dissolving views? Is the union between these vast representations something more than a wholly superficial and formal one? Is all that can be said about them that one preceded the other in time, and that in such a place such events took place? The writer has subdued himself into a sort of photographic machine, and on the sensitive prepared plate of his consciousness picture after picture is reflected and rendered with the accuracy of the sun. He has no explanation to offer, no opinion to express, no ideas or ideals to intrude. And yet as we demand a meaning from the world itself, we can hardly be satisfied unless we find a meaning here. By-and-by, too, a message comes from the tremendous maze, a voice seems to arise from the heaving and intense activity, a tone rising into

greater and greater clearness and having something to say with more and more distinctness.

The message is not a new one. It was pronounced ages ago under very different conditions, beneath warmer skies, and with the same underlying melancholy. Against the indefinite multitude of phenomena, not any one phenomenon can boast of superior validity. One member of the series has as much call to be as another, and, when its brief day is over, it vanishes perforce and beyond recall. If consciousness be only one link in such a chain, if mind be only one equal mutation of an endless host of mutations, each like it arising from a dark abyss of potencies where sight and light are not, and unto which all return, the ridding ourselves of a number of delusions, in which we have been indulging, becomes urgent and paramount. We may as well face the truth first as last, and understand that the ascription of freedom to any of our acts is a bit of childishness which it will be well for us to outgrow. Antecedent conditions, physical and spiritual heredity, have done it all, and recognize it sooner or later we must. In a recent poem, life is presented as the hopeless wandering of blind men, who have lost their way, and who are led by their sightless guide to the verge of the precipice where the great sea roars in the darkness of the coming night. The only thing worth knowing is the worthlessness of knowing, and the only thing worth feeling is the pitiableness of all feeling. The significance of the portrayal is the demonstration of its own insignificance, and the value of being is to be found in the recognition of its own valuelessness. The misfortunes and the crimes of men are part of the inscrutable and inflexible totality, and their occurrence at all is the mystery which is only rendered the more mysterious by any

attempt at explanation, that attempt itself being but the defeat which constantly expresses itself in the recurrence of the misery which it seeks to explain. Caught in the vast web of things, wisdom must be to cease to struggle, to float with the stream, to be at one with the environment, to be free from hope or fear, and to submit to the inevitable.

But all this is only another abstraction in which one cannot long draw his breath, and a freer atmosphere must be sought. Every act of the daily life contradicts the fine theory; every minute things must be done, and to do them implies a faith in a permanent somewhere and somehow. There must also be a unanimity of action or else nothing would come to pass; in a chaos of conflicting deeds not any one can arrive at maturity; in the whirlpool, ripple on ripple vanishes, and the only thing that remains is the constant nugatoriness of the whole. We will look for that which clearly everybody should submit to if life is to be at all possible; it may signify vast sacrifices, much suffering, persistent effort to make the habit of obedience the daily garment which we wear, but so much at least makes itself evident out of the roar and the confusion. There is a tendency in the world which we can see running all through it like a silver thread; there is a course of conduct which seems to perpetuate itself, which builds up all sorts of bulwarks to defend itself, which gradually has the sanction of the majority of mankind on its side. We call it doing right, and if we have nothing else to which we can pin our faith, we certainly have that. We can unite ourselves with that movement in the world which demands heroic sacrifices, which enforces duties, which, as the years roll on, becomes more and more the mistress and arbiter of history.

The realistic writer is now profoundly ethical. He has indeed shifted his ground, for one may justly ask whether duty is possible without an ideal to which it must look as a guiding star; however, he confines himself to the manifestations of duty as he actually finds them, as they are here and now in the social spheres, with which he comes in contact; the vagaries of those who talk about an absolute good or an eternal right belong to the past which believes in the interference of gods in the affairs of men and absurdly supposes the stars to have something to do with the fruitions of destiny. The natural history of conscience in the individual, the growth of the belief in the solidarity of the race, the gradual refinement of the response to the claims of the right, make full-length portraits to be hung up in the gallery of art. Virtue will ultimately be entirely automatic; the conditions surrounding it will only prompt to its highest activity, and the response within will be immediate and unfaltering. We shall have a goodness that will be perfect and throughout mechanical.

Unhappily this condition is far from realized; to all appearances it is far ahead in the vague and mistlike distance, enchanting, perhaps, but given to transformation as we approach it, and the old rocks and steep paths are there to be climbed as of old. We submit ourselves to the yoke; we heed the admonition to renounce, and again renounce; we look forward to the day when the descendants of the present toilers will be indefinitely in advance of these; but, as far as we can see, the work is still to be done, the harvest is never gathered, the labor is forever renewed, the series of deeds and sacrifices has no end. We are constantly failing to do the whole right in order that somebody may fail to do it

even more sadly than ourselves, and in order that the failure may be the more conspicuous in proportion to the growth of exquisite sensitiveness to the demands made upon it. The adjustment between outer and inner seems further off than ever. Nay, it seems postponed to such a remote futurity as to be practically out of reach. Why sacrifice yourself in order that some one else may sacrifice himself, and the totality of the sacrifices will only lead to the offering of its completeness on the insatiate altar which devours the victim, and then brings it to life again so that it may devour it once more, and so on forever? Why join the choir invisible when the song expected can never be sung, and the harmony evoked can never sound from the instruments employed? The duty can never be done; it will be as little possible for those who come after us to do it as for ourselves; the unity of the race and the reciprocity of man and his environment are empty fictions, unless, indeed, we bring back the ideal and spiritual life in which all are one and of which art should be the expression.

Our world is thus a very imperfect one; in it the right can never be wholly done; the good is never completely realized; the best efforts of the best minds are forever frustrated; the present is a condition which stands in need of constant betterment, and to-morrow, when it becomes to-day, will find us but little further on our way. The reconstruction of affairs must begin at the roots; the axe must be laid against the social system as it now is, and either a return must be made to a supposed simplicity, which reigned at some indefinable epoch in the remote past, or after a thorough-going destruction of the entire consummation as it exists now, an upbuilding must begin which will be radical.

At present the duty is mostly negative; the delineation of hypocrisy eating into the very heart of life and gradually destroying it, of the hollowness of all the relations of society, which have in them no genuine bond or vital connection, of the absence everywhere of strenuous and heroic characters, the utter failure of sincerity and vigor, when they do appear, on account of the hopeless conditions which inevitably destroy them, the typical lack of directness of purpose showing itself on all sides, makes the series of books following one another in rapid succession rather depressing reading. We all remember the story of the young woman who, finding the living with her husband no longer possible partly because of her own failure in strength and sincerity, abandons him to find truer development, and, conscious that she is incapable of judiciously bringing up her own children, leaves them to him, although she is aware that he is less able to do so than herself; or the picture of the young student just from college, who has inherited the waywardness of his father and other undesirable ancestors, who falls into a number of disagreeable complications, and who finally persuades his mother to give him poison so as to rid him of that last vestige of will to rise above himself, which will in her own case had only a short time before lifted her to a plane of real insight and victorious activity. Or we see rise before us the image of the strong man, who remained true to his convictions, narrow though they might be, throughout the vicissitudes of a disastrous career, and who ends his life miserably in a solitude from which every trace of life has vanished, except the momentary presence of a mad person who is on the eve of the same destruction as himself. The Family, Society, the State, all are wrong; in the words of one of the

realists: "The State is the curse of the individual, the State must go! That will be the revolution which will find me on its side! Undermine the idea of the State, set up in its place spontaneous action, and the idea that spiritual relationship is the only thing that makes for unity, and you will start the elements of a liberty which will be something worth possessing." When the destruction is complete, when all the results of the historic efforts of mankind have been swept into the abyss, what then? The answer is not forthcoming unless we are willing to accept as such the proposed return to a sort of state of nature in which everybody will till the soil, in which everybody will be equally poor and equally subjected to the severest strain of physical labor, in which all property will be held in common, and in which there will be leisure only for vague dreams and pious imaginings, not having the unanimity of a religious faith, but pursued at the whim and fancy of the individual. Then there is also the industrial millennium, in which each man is drilled to his task like a soldier obedient to the captain's command, and at intervals has free participation in various pleasures provided by the commonwealth; and the æsthetic millennium, when the smoke of railroads will no more darken the landscape, and the creation of the beautiful will be the purpose of all men. One's deepest sympathies cannot be other than enlisted in these courageous exposures of the ailments which afflict the world, and the pictures of nobler and truer living which are anticipated in the better years approaching.

Here is this vast body of work, novels, poems, essays, pictures, philosophies, poured forth without stint, and demanding recognition as the chief agency which represents what

is really going on in the minds of men, and which is transforming the face and heart of society; the industry and the sincerity are marvelous, and the achievement portentous and immense. One may readily feel that the rightful estimation of so great a result can be no easy task, and have many misgivings as to the present possibility of doing so. Posterity, with its calm, dispassionate eye, can only see this fierce activity aright, and study it with the requisite freedom from prejudgment and haste. It can certainly not be without its function and purpose, and indeed a very important one. No age has poured forth a more eager, intense, ceaseless stream, nor has felt a more complete confidence in its procedure, nor has fought more strenuously for the entire recognition of the work produced. The movement has been altogether sure of itself, and has labored accordingly. It has been apparently without any criterion in itself to discriminate between the varying significance attaching to its products. Everything that has come to the mill has been ground with equal avidity and ponderous accuracy, and nothing has been excluded. Art has hitherto made a number of distinctions, and has on the principle of relative inclusiveness decided not to give up her arduous toilings to the moments which were of necessity involved in the greater performances. If in a picture are already included sky and wind and cloud and a great deal besides, is it worth while to spend too much time on a study of cloud alone, which at best, when thoroughly done, can be hardly made much more than a study for something of higher value? The great player does not indulge in the practice of the most elaborate passages in public; his art must not exhaust itself in such trivialities. Moreover, with the banishment of a guide, there has poured

into the light of day the accumulated follies and noisomeness which everybody knows, but which nobody wants to talk about. The survival of the savagery of the prehistoric ages, lingering in the dark corners of modern life and wilder and more vicious to-day in its repression than when allowed free scope and development, receives the attention of a minute and patient analysis. The unutterable we have still with us, but there appears no good reason why it should be uttered. It is dead, left forever behind in the victorious march of the ages. We know all about it, and not a new syllable can be said concerning it. But if a discrimination is to be made as to the subjects properly belonging to art, and those which should be excluded, there must be found a guide, a principle, which must be the basis of the discrimination. Besides, throughout the writings of the realistic school, there appears to be a prevalent unrest, a dissatisfaction with what has been done, a fierce assault upon the conditions of life as they are with literal accuracy depicted, a groping after something very vaguely outlined, or a fashioning of fantastic schemes for the amelioration of mankind. Whence is the needed illumination to come? Whence is the guide to walk equipped for leadership and assured of followers? The stream of facts, however assiduously studied, reveals nothing in itself; they follow one after another, and indifferently reflect themselves in the vision that is riveted upon them. Reality as such proceeds past the gazer with lips closed and mute. The principle of discrimination, the guidance which leads to the light in which the maze falls into relation and meaning, cannot be sought out there; they cannot be merely a part of the phantoms moving there in ceaseless progress; they cannot be found outside of mankind; they can only be discovered

within, in the deep thought of the world which, encircling it, gives it unity and life and significance; they can only be found in that ideality which is the meeting ground of all mankind, which is the inalienable property of every man, and the center of his manhood.

This ideality is not an abstraction; it is not derived by the exclusion of properties from particular objects, and the consequent erection of tenuous shadows in the consciousness, which grow thinner and finally vanish as the process goes on. The ideal is the articulated thought-life which is around and above and beneath all, into which individual consciousness arises, and identifying itself with its completeness, finds at last its true rest and abiding place. As such the ideal is the archetypal world in whose image and likeness are all things made, and whose reproduction in the world of the poet and the novelist constitutes the beauty and the life of the creation. All history has been ascending into deeper and true consciousness of this abiding realm which engirds the restlessness of the time-world with the peace of eternity, and the fierceness of the feud of want and have with the gift and calm of the whole.

The difference between the ancient and the modern world lies in the profounder recognition by ourselves of this depth in which all particularities move and have their being, this ideal which is the true real because the latter reaches its highest being by its identity and coincidence with that. After all, the loveliness of Greek art is mainly of the earth; modern literature must recognize that spiritual realm in which is the unity of the consciousness of man and the consciousness of the divine, that supereminent thought-world in which all problems are solved, all tragedies terminated in

a denouement of reconciliation in which is life and hope eternal. In any part which ignores this truest discovery of the ages, which refuses to it allegiance and devotion, which confines itself to the spectacle as it fleets and glooms and storms out there, we can but find a virtual return to views of the world, which are no longer living, which the dead past buried long ago. Into such writings must be poured the splendor of the modern spirit, and such infilling of them is sure and inevitable.

The great achievement of the realistic school is mainly one of form; they have delved into the bowels of the earth and brought thence the richest treasures; they have horsed themselves upon the wildest winds and penetrated the secrets of the roots of the skies, they have traveled on the light of stars and brought back messages from the vague blackness in which the galaxies float; they have heaped up mountains of fact and story; they have once more filled the granaries from which the coming generations may bear unending burdens; they have discovered new combinations of tones in color and sound and have done the labor which fell to their lot manfully and superbly; they deserve the honor and the gratitude of men and they will receive it in a measure that is as large and superb as is their desert. They belong to the transition and the interim; what they have done will be utilized in the new structure which is to arise.

The ideal is never dead; it may be denied, but the very denial of it is its affirmation. No one can deny anything without at the same time affirming that he has within him an ideal principle which is the ground of the denial. The very confinement of art-productivity to the photographic process is to assume the truth and validity of a method

which was reached by ways other than that of the photography. The dissatisfaction with the life which is around us, the weaving of wonder tales to beguile us into momentary forgetfulness of the anguish of being, the construction of allegories figuring in the near or remote future a perfection not yet attained, the whole fever and unrest which pants and moans through the literature of the day, the solemn asking ourselves of such a question as is life worth living, and the solemn responses to it, point forward straight and inevitably to that region of knowledge which contains the seeds and types of all that is, and converts the so-called reality into shadows and reflections. As Carlyle says in *Sartor Resartus:* "Oh could I (with the Time-annihilating Hat) transport thee direct from the beginning to the endings, how were thy eyesight unsealed, and thy heart set flaming in the light of celestial wonder! Then sawest thou that this fair Universe, were it in the meanest province thereof, is in very deed the star-domed city of God; that through every star, through every grass-blade, and most through every living soul, the glory of a present God still beams. But Nature, which is the Time Vesture of God, and reveals Him to the wise, hides Him from the foolish." If the faith in the ideal is at any time eclipsed, it cannot be for long, nay, it can never wholly be. In the consciousness of that which is true and just and permanent, in vital communion with that which is the substance and height, man must find himself at last truly at home, and the light which thus suffuses him must flow into all these means which he uses as communications of himself. The real becomes thus again the expression of profound realities, the medium for declaration of the truth, and the veil which is forever lifted before the entrance of the

sanctuary. Literature and all art will ascend into the vision of the certain, the assured, the self-affirming; they will make their dwelling in the realized ideality of the race, and penetrate further and more adequately into those infinite reaches which beckon and allure them. They will no longer skim like swallows across the rippled surfaces; they will shudder no longer at any depths or fear to climb any heights; but, as in the great days which shine like suns down the long reach of time, they will make the real, not less accurately and minutely studied than now, not shorn of any of its needful details, the transparent medium which shows throughout its every part, in its faintest leaf and tendril, in all its blossoms and fruit, that concrete truth which is the idea of the World, of Man, of Society.

Such works of the imagination cannot be any less real than the experimental fiction (so-called) of to-day; it is curious that observation should arrogate to itself the exclusive right to reach reality, when it is constantly obliged to supplement itself by other observations and bring them together in one view, which is not observant at all. The true work of the dramatist was always real; can any one suppose that the reality was never in any sense approached before, and that it was obliged to wait for the modern French school of writers to discover it, or for the American writers of short stories to catch it in the act, so to speak? The whole is more real than the part; the ground or reason is more true than the fact explained; the ought-to-be is more essentially valid than that which only is. The signs of the times are clear enough; the new departure is not far off; the great questions are no longer to be left untouched and unsung; the morning twilight is over, and the new day is about to begin.

We are to have a new incarnation of the ideality of mankind in poetry, in story, in art of all kinds. There will be a resurgence of the old faith in the unseen and spiritual deeps from which all life and labor flow; another larger revelation of the absolute and divine. "For beauty, truth, and goodness," says Emerson, "are not obsolete; they spring eternal in the breast of man; they are as indigenous in New York or Massachusetts as they are in Tuscany or the Isles of Greece. And that Eternal Spirit, whose triple face they are, molds from them forever, for his mortal child, images to remind him of the Infinite and Fair."

CRITICS AND CRITICISM

WE are all of us possessed of views and opinions; nor do we have much reticence in expressing and defending them. Indeed we seem to start with a general assumption that there is no subject on which we are not authorized to make a deliverance. We lay claim at once to the whole of knowledge, and to the entire sweep of practical activity, and demand to be heard, when a verdict is to be given or an account to be made up. This is a fact not at all to be deplored, no matter how strange and fantastic may be its manifestations. Unless the claim, based on some as yet obscurely apprehended certainty, were made in the beginning, we should in all probability not be able to confirm the ultimate conclusion after a due struggle had given it assuredly into our grasp. We begin with a vague and general oversight, we proceed to a definite and detailed analysis, we end with a synthesis, which is a return to the beginning, but that beginning is now clarified throughout and serves us as a new starting point for further and more complicated adventures. This account of our procedure is nothing fresh or original; it is as old as Plato, and as new as the effort of the most pronounced futurist to get away from the fearfully objectionable, moribund, and conventional. The most infatuated upholder of the latest idol of the theater finds himself held in obedience to the encompassing and liberating laws of thought.

That we should make an effort to pass judgment upon

the eventualities passing before us and constituting our world is a foregone conclusion. We may take whatever pleasure we will in the object soliciting our attention, we may bury ourselves as deep as we choose in a thing, or an experience, but sooner or later we begin to ask ourselves for the reasons of our delight or absorption. The period of unconscious activity has come to an end, the epoch of questioning, dissecting, and comparing has set in. The paradise of seeing, touching, and naming has admitted the questioner, and we are not far from the words of doom and the flaming sword of the angel of the negative, who in the book of Job figures as the adversary who returns from walking up and down the earth, and in the incomparable mystic drama of Goethe's as Mephistopheles, the spirit who denies. In the philososphy of Hegel the negative plays a part as significant and inevitable as the positive.

We cannot, however, rest content with the somewhat barren results of analysis; indeed an infinite series of malign disasters confronts us. The analysis has in all probability proceeded without any guiding principle. It has been the result of a more or less capricious activity, and it has induced the creation of manifold spheres of thought, all of them more or less factitious and contradictory. Hence the endless disputes of critics, all of them apparently sane, and learned, and trustworthy. The analysis assuredly ought to be scientific and follow the essential processes of the matter investigated. The realist, the impressionist, the æsthetic dreamer, the formalist, are all of them insistent upon a single point of view, which inevitably results in distortion and confusion. The *via rationis* will have to be found, and the true divisions of the object must be discovered, and then the dismember-

ment must be succeeded by a recomposition, the wholeness, no longer in its opaque sensuous charm or its break into multitudinous qualifications, but in its crystal-clear fullness and completeness.

The synthetic critic is to present his matter as it is, he must discover its due place and proportion, he must find its realm and atmosphere, he must show its relation to its allies and congeners. This is no longer a point of view, which is necessarily a narrowing of the outlook, but a reconstitution in the intelligence of the particular material under discussion. This is the ideality in its best and highest estate, a part of the permanent possessions of the race and its civilization.

The objective, subjective, or recognitive critic may look upon his object in its material and temporal constitution. He may take it up in its immediate presentation, he may confine his attention to its obvious qualifications, he may limit himself to seeing it in its purely sensuous aspects. If it is a novel he may be satisfied with repeating its story, adding some near-lying comment, which may exhibit either a kindly or indifferent or hostile attitude, but which as a judgment leaves still considerable to be desired; if it is a collection of poems or a longer effort in verse, he may select salient passages or reproduce a characteristic sonnet or lyric, but the work can hardly be judged in so perfunctory a manner. All this may be done dispassionately and with every appearance of freedom from prejudgment, but the result remains for the most part unconvincing. The objective criticism calls for much supplementation.

The critic may give to his prolusions the color and variety of his moods. He may consider that he has done his whole duty when he has made every work coming under his ob-

servation the starting point of reveries in which he is prone to indulge; and that the work is great and valuable in so far as it induces myriad trains of thought of iridescent texture and incalculable capacities of mutation. In these cases the end in view is not so much to find out what the object is as to learn what it is not. The idiosyncracy of the critic is the main thing; he exercises a creative potency over the material he is subjecting to his especial processes, and he produces a far-fetched and unique result. The subjective critic's name is legion; we have him all around us; his judgments possess indubitable interest, that may have permanent value, but his methods, it must be said, are far from infallible.

The true critic will endeavor to avoid both extremes. He will not be satisfied with a jejune repetition of the work in the language and circle of ideas which are the sphere in which he has his life and movement; he will not care for factitious sentiment which has but little relevance to the genuine nature of the product he is discussing; he will remember that sentiment has a history and development; that people at different times have regarded the same object with wholly diverse emotions; and that all the vagaries of the impressionists have in all probability worked out their complete dialectic upon national fields of operation long ago, and perhaps time and again; he will try to see the object in the complete round of its possibilities, he will connect it with the normal feeling which indubitably accompanies it, and he will find the place which it generally occupies in the arena of the world's activities.

Again criticism has been in a great many instances technical to a marked degree. The structural element has entered into it with preponderating efficiency. Poetry has been mis-

interpreted into an elaborate discussion of rhythms and stanzaic peculiarities and compositional differences. Painting has found its successful explanation in disquisitions on fluidity of line, and arrangements of light and shade, and harmony of color; as a result we have had miraculous combinations which have satisfied certain requirements, but which have labored under the difficulty of being wholly destitute of message, and wholly unlike any scene or occurrence which has enjoyed the solace of the moon or sun in their circumnavigations of the heavens. Every art, every subject has had its elements abstracted from its concrete manifestation, and a relatively unreal *mixtum compositum* has been developed, which in general appeals more to the fabricator and so-called expert than any one who contemplates the work of man from the simply human standpoint.

The abstraction antagonistic to the criticism based upon the technique is the criticism based upon the content. The emphasis is now placed upon the meaning of the work of art and an undoubted hierarchy can be established upon this principle. Such a serial arrangement has of course a very decided value. From mere sensuous enjoyment to the noblest aspirations and achievements of humanity the steps of the pyramid extend, and at the apex they vanish into the as yet unapparent idealizations of labors and successes that belong to the very heavens themselves. There can be no evading this issue: the higher the thought, the greater the art-product, even though the audience be only few and fit. The artist always works with the great audience in view who are parallel to himself in his most inspired moments; yet Goethe has said that the greatest injury was done to art by the dilettante who neglected the form and overpraised the con-

tent. We have had this proposition extensively to deal with in recent times, when every sort of demonstration has been made of the essential emptiness of art, and its dependence on formal harmonies or coöperant externalities entirely for the success of its sorceries and enchantments. After all, nobody really believes that Debussy is as great a musician as Strauss or Wagner, or that Beaumont was as great a dramatist as Shakespeare, or that Fortuny was as great a painter as Millet. The content cannot be omitted from the consideration of the arts, and their connection with the life of man is largely based on meaning. Yet the art creation is neither form alone nor content alone, but some nobler combination of both, and the critic will be forced to speak from the standpoint of this unity. That there are in the world examples of this consummate unity there can be no doubt, expressions in literature or sculpture or architecture or music which bear within themselves a profound understanding of unquestionable idealities, and which utter these with a perfection which leaves nothing to be desired.

The greatness of our own Hawthorne lies here; he has almost succeeded in making the novel a genuine piece of finished artistry; he may have done it by a limitation of its possibilities, but he has accomplished what no other writer of the prose romance has done, he has brought its uncontrollable tendency to overparticularization, and its insatiable appetite for unreasonable details, into something like the moderation and boundaries which the old Greeks demanded in their maxims of "nothing too much" and "the half is more than the whole." The standpoint which the critic here has reached is that of genuine interpretation, he accepts the work in its decisive individuality, and discovers its purpose

and meaning in relation to the works of its class. He places it in coöperation with the active intellectual forces that bring about an effective understanding of epoch and historic progress, and so makes a judgment, which may be said to be the judgment itself of the objective literary or artistic process, and therefore is bound to be final and permanent. This verdict is at once sensuous and impressionistic and spiritual; it is historic and immediate; it is sentimental and intellectual; it is particular and universal; it is the verdict of the ultimate judicial process; it is the temporal *sub quadam specie eternitatis,* the discovery of the immortality inherent in the movement of time and historic achievement, which thought has always demanded.

We come now upon one of the most far-reaching antitheses which the evolution of criticism has presented, the antithesis of classic and romantic; and their possible unity in a comprehension deeper than either rises upon the horizon. The classic in art or criticism is, of course, the tendency to dignified restraint, to emphasis upon form in its genuine sense of adequate and exquisite expression, the content freely molding its interpretative instrument into such complete exteriorization, that the vehicle in every lineament, in every evanescent resplendence, in every attitude, from every point of view, reflects its source; the outer, indeed, thus becomes the inner, and the whole is but one consentaneous expression. The classic in all times and arts finds its devotees and upholders, and the critics have here divided into essentially differenced parties. The classic critic insists upon moderation, upon the subordination of the particular, upon concentrated form, in short. He may even have a tendency to believe in the unities of time and place and action. He will make good

use of the Aristotelian analysis of the action into beginning, middle and end, liberally interpreted; he will show that the ode with all its capricious development must return to its beginning to be effective, that the drama must not make the mistake of the pseudo-art form, the novel, and constantly overflow its borders with more or less irrelevant detail, that the secret of admirable success is concentration, form in its æsthetic sense.

The so-called romantic view takes the opposite direction. Its whole tendency is towards detail, towards expansion. It runs to the shoreless, the unlimited. It has appeared in all times and in all movements of art and criticism. As the concentrative movement allies itself with idealism and the established faith, so the romantic outgrowth connects itself with realism and the so-called enlightenment, the revolt against the established and the organized. If ancient art emphasized law and order and organic completeness, medieval art went to the other extreme, and emphasized vast developments and exteriorizations, monstrous satire and grotesquerie. So the enlightenment reveled in the particularism and chance discoveries of science, and the classic revivals paid tribute to the moderation of Greece and the insights of philosophy. The critics have divided on these lines and the discussion between the two views continues in our own time. Yet art has more than once reconciled the differences, and criticism has more than once made a similar achievement.

The organic wholeness of the product must be the guiding star of the critical activity. The product is neither law and order alone, nor is it a multiplicity of details alone. It is a concrete unity of both, a complete expression of ideality in

a real investiture, which so entirely reflects the inner essence in every shadowy line of form that the outer becomes, as it were, the inner, and the resultant art product is a life that carries with it dynamic eternity of action. The critical spirit is thus itself a conscious reflection of wholeness of process, and is a segment of an infinite thinking which gives to everything its place and function in the encompassing universe. The individual critic rises to the universal and eternal, his thought is inclusive of himself as critic and judge as well as of the object criticized and judged, he expresses the verdict irrefragable and unchangeable, he judges his own activity and eliminates his own errors, he is truth itself uttering itself, the creative idea promulgating the indefeasible and final decision in regard to every possible aspect of its life and work. He is no longer a selfhood, a limited being in time and space, a medium of expression here and now, he is the comprehension of the all, the verdict of eternity, the universal thought, setting the crown and seal of self-recognition and self-arbitrament upon its own labors and products and results.

The critic may be dominated by the faith of his time and country. This may cover all the ground of his nation's activities. He may be an adherent and exponent of the fixed and established. He may carry it so far as to be a reactionary in every sense. He may espouse the national religion, or what he esteems as the world's religion, and issue his fulminations *ex cathedra*. He may base his beliefs on wholly irrational grounds, he may put religion into a domain of apprehension which is not intellectual, and found his judgments on the purely imaginary and unprovable. He may in politics object to all innovations, and regard the republican idea as a

chimera of a diseased consciousness. The rabble perforce will be always the rabble; the poor in spirit and in household goods and in bank stock we are sure always to have with us; poverty goes with prosperity, and enlightenment must always have its infinite surrounding of ignorance; the *Übermensch* must always have the vast array of the downtrodden as a pedestal for his sun-illumined greatness. So art must be aristocratic; it appears only at times of national exuberance in wealth and power; it has never done any good in the American Commonwealth. Greece and Rome were fundamented on a working class that were practically in a state of peonage. Faith is a star that shines in a sky having only lesser and scarcely distinguishable luminaries. The humanities are offspring of the past; the future we cannot reckon upon; the established, the interests, the offspring of the ages, are the norm and rule of judgment. Walt Whitman is a man who gives a fillip of enjoyment to a jaded sensibility, but his doctrine, like that of the Declaration of Independence, is a snare and a delusion, in so far as it points to the equality of men, and Christianity is no better with its assertion of the infinite sonship of every man out of the loins of the one and same infinite.

The critic of the established faith finds his specific antagonist in the critic of the éclaircissement, of the abounding and egregious enlightenment. The dark of the faiths has now given place to the dawn, which is sure to eventuate in the fullness of illuminative splendor. The difficulties, inherent in the adequate solution of the great intellectual problems, can at once be disposed of by thrusting them into out-of-the-way receptacles like the Unknowable or the Thing-in-itself or the Negative Infinite or the Pantheistic

Grand Être. The religions are now seen to be diseases of the human consciousness, which must be thrown off with the advancing civilizations, or upheavals from the subliminal or subconscious, which is merely the weltering waste of incoherent and unregulated nature, or some national manifestation of that horror, the Unconscious, with its weird clairvoyance of things near and far in a maze of mystery. The enlightenment is the regnant skepticism, the sensuous knowing is all it has to deal with, and strictly speaking it ought to be satisfied with the immediate sensation. It goes farther, however, and enters the region of the relative; here it is sure to be impaled on either horn of an exquisite dilemma, which is bound to be excruciating torment, whichever side is adopted. The pragmatical philosopher is no better, for he gives an impossible proof of an inexpressible proposition, as both the proposition and the demonstration inevitably call into being elements which he refuses to recognize. The result is a hopelessly decapitated view of the world, or a surreptitious and illogical reintroduction of profound verities, for which the chaos — it cannot be denominated a system — has no place, or an agonizing breaking through into the realm of the true, which in most cases remains a vast endeavor rather than an achievement.

The emergence into the light out of this darkness of the misnamed illumination is made by the recognition of the organic wholeness of the truth. Thought is itself unthinkable without such recognition. The method of thought must needs be an absolute method, or safety and conclusion are both out of the question. The attempt to live within a circumscribed realm in accordance with arbitrarily posited regulations is based upon the contradictory assumption of

the absoluteness of the circumscription. Moreover, the history of thought shows its constant victory over every limit whensoever or wheresoever imposed upon it. In every age some thinker has made a statement to the effect that some problems are wholly insolvable by the very constitution of our mental organization; the next age calmly finds a solution for his impossibilities, and has no further use for his regulations. The relative presupposes the self-limited, the determined presupposes the self-determined. We live always in the realm of the presupposition, and the circumscription is only recognizable because of the self-circumscribing power of thought. There is an absolute system of the universe; this absolute system is the organic wholeness of the thought process, and the real critic must allow this thought process to achieve its results through him, including him in its all-embracing completeness. This is the veritable last judgment, the placing of the subject criticized in its exact location and permanent relationship, the ultimate completion of the critical process, the self-adjudication of the subject matter in its establishment in the whole, a process transcending the individual, inclusive of temporality and spatiality, and, like the decision of the Pope in Browning's *Ring and the Book,* expressive of the plenary infallibility of the representative of God and Heaven within the terrene expanse.

It is now important to see the application of the fundamental principles announced above. The great line of critics down the ages should furnish exemplifications of the classes and differentiations enumerated, and we should find with sufficient frequency men who have recognized the value and significance of their calling. Nevertheless the great body of critical work has been done with a more or less unconscious

acceptance of the importance of the work, and it is curious to note that critics have found it desirable to criticize everything and everybody excepting themselves. The history of criticism in the main is a modern achievement, whether attempted as an ambitious occupation of the whole field, or a conquest of certain limited territories. Moreover, the histories of criticism have themselves been written from various special points of view, and fall into the classifications already discussed in the preceding pages. They are therefore subjects of unification, like the individuals or systems with which they deal.

The Oriental mind seems to dwell in the large measures of the universe. It disdains the explicit and definite, and prefers the rich illuminations of the incommensurable and the unexpressed. Whether like the Japanese, it revels in a pantheistic absorption as in Shintoism, or like the Chinese, in an ancestor worship which thrusts everything back into an unfathomable past, or like the Hindu, finds peace and haven at last in a unity from which all difference has been eliminated, the fundamental outlook is vast and dark with excess of light. The critical consciousness in such conditions finds itself confronted with difficulties almost insuperable at every step. It becomes perforce generalized, gigantic, encyclopedic. The Japanese have immense books of criticism, the Chinese an encyclopedia so tremendous as never to have been wholly published, the Hindus schools of linguistic discussion of the most varied types. It remained for Greece to envisage the world with such explicitness that the critical spirit could feel the life-blood coursing through its veins with awakening activity.

In Greek criticism one may begin with Plato. All earlier

efforts lead up to him, and the true Socrates appears in his pages. The *Memorabilia* has all the gray and somewhat faded aspects of the merely real, as contrasted with the splendor that shines from the true delineation, risen by the generous necessity of the achievement into the beauty that has held the undeviating admiration and continuing research of the generations. Nor will the inquisition ever cease; the self-recognition of humanity in the full-length portraiture by the chief diviner among the philosophers is a perennial attainment of the culture which is lofty and noble. The definition which is given of beauty indicates the standpoint; the statement that beauty is the splendor of the true shows how the philosopher regarded all art; he saw it to be one of the ways by which mind awoke to a comprehension of itself, one of the means by which thought comes to clearness and a thorough discovery of the system which pervades it and constitutes it what it was. This critical aperçu leaves very little to subsequent seekers except reiteration and elaboration. The work on which adjudication is sought falls into its place in the organism of the world, and by such positioning presents its own verdict upon itself, free from any subjective bias of the critic. The thing is placed *sub quadam specie eternitatis,* and its final destiny is assured. The exclusion of poets from the commonwealth is explainable from this mountain height. The more inclusive interest dominates the lesser; the nobler art brings into subjection the less beneficent; poetry, music, architecture, should emphasize the progress of mankind into the perfect accomplishment of the highest destination; there is such an accomplishment in the transcendent order of the whole; this is the perfect state forever existent in the heavens; and every realized

community shows in less or greater degree this eminent commonwealth. Where the poet fails to perceive this, where he sings from an inspiration below the Olympian summits, where his harmonies are other than those of the spheres, his voice perforce sinks into the silence of desuetude, his function loses its nerve, his office as hierophant crumbles into ruin. Plato above everyone expressed the Greek consciousness at its culmination of outlook into the infinite assurance of the inevitable reality of the ideal. As such expresser he is in every age the mouthpiece of that justified belief in the permanence of the good, the vision of which allures with unfaltering love, and the reproduction of which fills all times and spaces with the beauty, before which death reads its doom of evanescence into a participation of the everlasting transfiguration.

The romantic tendencies, sure to be present in every age, show themselves in the phantasmagoric manifestations of the sophists. The Protagorean dictum, that man is the measure of all things, when taken in the universal acceptation, no doubt is an expression of the truth; the whole man is the whole truth; the entire rationality is the universe; the true is the rational and the rational is the true; but the Sophists, at whose head was Protagoras himself, took the dictum only in its narrow subjective sense, not in its large underlying objective comprehensiveness. As such it becomes the paternity of every wild fantasy the human consciousness can evoke, and the extravagance of abstract romanticism is let loose with all its terrors, Medusa with her serpentine ringlets, only to be petrified through the far-darting splendor of the shield of the embodied brains and reason of Zeus, the tutelary goddess of cultured Athens, Pallas Athene.

The speculative reason comes to the rescue in the person of the greatest mind of antiquity: Aristotle puts into his all-comprehending system the theory of the arts. He finds art to be a reproduction of the whole of life in the spiritual realm, an expression by mankind of a deeper comprehension of itself. Mimesis is far more than an imitation, it is more than symbolic reiteration of the truth, it is the entrance into a new and higher realm, whose principal is the celestial love, and whose organization is the expression of the truth in its entire extent and ultimate completeness, internal and external.

The tragic here becomes the purification of the spirit, the renascence of hope and excellence through the influences of awe and pity, the realm of reconciliation is seen encircling that of conflict and disaster. The uplift of humanity shines through the arts; they constitute an all-comprehending system; they are the dwelling place of all mankind in one of its highest phases and accomplishments. Aristotle is the first great critic of the race, and it may be questioned if any have exceeded him. The Roman world has in Horace the genius of epigram, the essence of friendship, the charm of badinage, the moderation that constitutes beauty and makes the suave and generous critic with the satirical smile that has in it no bitterness. Then Quintillian is the prince of schoolmasters, and the hero of good sense and limitations. So are there many others, Seneca and Pliny, who explain the Roman power and impetus; but Lucretius and Catullus and Virgil and Cicero transcend the bounds, and the indigenous critical spirit does not reach their heights and ardors and accomplishments.

The procedure then passes on into the reflective stage. The

great creative period has now become history, and as a factual aggregation lies subject to analysis and discussion. The ways in which the artist has worked come into view and the technique is considered principally in its separateness and abstraction. The scholiast, the grammarian, the lexicographer, has come into his own, and he is not slow to take possession of the domain, which deeply solicits his ardent palate. He appears in all his forms and guises.

Dionysius of Halicarnassus is typical of his tribe. He is the grammarian par excellence. He has little care for aught else than the technique. He will deal learnedly and exhaustively with terms, phrases, sentences, but the subject matter makes less appeal. That a work of art is the unity of content and form does not appear as one of his mental prepossessions; figures of speech, abstract rhetoric, versification are the important matters. It is not his fault; he is a child of his age. With him go the much-producing Plutarch and the arch-negative Lucian. If he inclines more to a classic view of his metier, the others give a larger rein, and are therefore the more evocative of romantic charms and cadences. Nevertheless, the glamour of the technical has hold on them, and they are bound unto its influences and results. With Plutarch the ethical is the more in the ascendent, but he is yet allured by the wraith and the abstraction. There is a reaction in Longinus, one of the greatest critics of all time, but the movement rushes on in spite of him. No wonder that the upholders of vital and concrete criticism hail him as the great master of the craft, the epoch-making predecessor, the sovereign in the realm. But he is born out of his due time when criticism is divorced from the spiritual movement of the world, when it becomes an unrelated succession of rules and precepts,

when it has perforce strong attraction for the deniers of the purposive idealism in which the universe lives and moves and has its being.

There must be a return to the concrete and universal, and, in a sense fully justified, it will be an advance on the first great comprehending stage. The light of Christianity too has come into the world, and an inner subjective realm, hell and purgatory and heaven, the light abortive, the light in clarification, the light in supreme fullness and luster, has shone upon mankind, never to be extinguished or surpassed. The great transition from the ancient to the modern world is to be made. The full discrimination between inner and outer is now to be achieved. The great man who accomplished this serious task, who finds in art and literature the expression of an inner realm, the illumination from an inner light, the beauty which is always the reflection from an inner and supernal glory, is Plotinus. With him the distinctively subjective comes into play, the naïf absorption in nature is dualized, the world at its highest point presents the antithesis of subjective and objective, beauty is the conjunction in which all differences are harmonized. We pass from paganism into Christianity. The Semite leads the way; he upholds transcendent unity, his view is the sublimest ever come to mankind. His Orientalism and Greek Occidentalism join in jocund nuptials. God and man are seen to be one, the Son is equal to the Father, the Spirit is the sublime reconciliation in which all participate, and all work is but a part of that supreme work.

In the established literature of Christianity the double aspect makes its appearance. The Platonic exclusion of Homer from the ideal Republic was due to impiety; with

Savonarola the moral rectitude plays a conspicuous part. Writings are for edification; if they serve not this purpose, they are to be eschewed. The great poet Dante was as far in advance of his time in criticism as in poetry. His defense of the mother tongue (*De vulgari eloquio*) places him among the great critics. His illustrious epic was not for the scholar, it was for everybody. How could it be otherwise? A poem, displaying the way a man should go if he wishes to attain the true end of his being, could not be written in Latin, with which, after all, only the elect were familiar. Besides, could Latin express the thought? The ancient world had been overpassed and transcended. The new wine could not be put into the old bottles.

Then the new birth of the Renaissance, the rediscovery of the Greek, the recrudescence of the pagan freshness and freedom. But, after all, it produces less in the field of criticism than in others of far higher importance. It brought in a new painting and sculpture and architecture, it developed a new drama and a new poetry, but in criticism it foreruns a new narrowness and bondage. The erudite Scaliger gives birth to rules and regulations. The good sense of Vida is not capable of explaining the spontaneity of genuine verse, the wise Castelveltro imposes on mankind the three unities, the morning freshness and vivid color of Ronsard are not reflected in his judicial writings, the vigorous mentality of Ben Jonson ceases to flame and coruscate in his sober prose. Montaigne is more the philosopher than the critic, and Germany has yet to wait for her men with the world-encircling voices. So the pseudo-classic epoch is now upon us.

It is a great epoch for the critical spirit, an era of clearness and common sense. The illumination has full sway. There

is nothing anywhere which is not explainable. The human understanding has come into its own, the verities of the speculative reason are found to be impossible hypotheses, which fall into contradiction when envisaged too closely. In France we have Boileau, who gives us indubitable rectilineal regulations, and then Rousseau, who mitigates his straightforward precepts by splendors of sentiment, and then Voltaire, who converts every supersensuous vagary into its futile elements of satirical antithesis. In England there are Pope and Dryden, and the critical spirit, supposed at one time to be purely of the essence of prose, discovers itself seated under the canopy in the indefeasible chair of poetry. Dr. Johnson, religious and ponderous, possesses after all the profoundest insight of his century. Germany also makes a contribution with the classic Gottsched and the humorous Gellert.

But the storms of revolution were at hand. The serene complacency could not last forever. The earlier writings were rediscovered and studied. The romantic fervor again took possession of men. The narrow limits in which art had been cribbed, cabined, and confined were shattered, and the earlier freedom was demanded and seized. In England Wordsworth and Coleridge and Lamb and Hazlitt made a new criticism and a new synthesis, the supersensuous returned in lambent glory, *Tintern Abbey,* the incomparable ode, called by Emerson the high tide of poetry of the era, the mystical mariner, the Shelleyan *Defense of Poetry,* were indeed portents. In France, Gautier, the dauntless and impassioned, Victor Hugo, gigantic and prophetic, supreme among his countrymen, De Vigny and Quinet, sorcerers and wonder-workers, effaced the pallid luminosities of the febrile classicists. Germany at a bound reached her highest. The criticism of all

the ages finds its culmination, unsurpassed and unsurpassable, in Hegel; Schiller, forever young, forever enthusiastic, forever noble and elevated, enlarges and popularizes the great and serious Kant, and for the serenest mind of Europe, the just seeing, the sympathetic, the supremely sighted Goethe, such words as we find at our command seem frail and disappointingly inadequate. Nor can we fail to remember the thoughtful and learned Lessing who, like John the Baptist, felt himself to be the forerunner of the illumined Son of the Spirit.

We are approaching the end of our tale. The critic is becoming conscious of the importance of his labors. He asks himself what is the function of criticism, and he answers his own question. The Schlegels and Heine in Germany appraise from a clearly envisaged view of the world; the master Saint Beuve, the idealist, Joubert, the encyclopedic, the subtle-minded Renan, the chief wizard of them all, Brunetière accomplish wonders, and not behind them are George Sand and Matthew Arnold, although they are perhaps too much engrossed in the negative. Positive and sure-voiced, and therefore securer of perpetuation, are Ruskin and Carlyle and Emerson, the last a true son of the idea, and everywhere its expresser. Then we come upon the silver-voiced Oscar Wilde, enamored of the paradox, but a gazer, nevertheless, upon the truth; and Lowell knew how to sum up in an article the quintessence of a writer; but the chief of commentators, the uniter in himself of all gifts, is the man who has interpreted for the modern world the four greatest poets, who has recognized wonderfully the significance and compass of his labors, who has converted criticism into the pure gold of speculative comprehension, Denton J. Snider.

But the critic's work, is it final or subsidiary? He labors for another more comprehensive than himself. His judgments, after all has been said, are individual and isolated. They are parts of the universal judgment which is bound to transform them in making them parts of its substance and transfiguration. The philosopher needs to take hold of them and make them part of that articulated, completely expressed idea, which is life and thought universal, whole, true, personal, conscious, glorified.

LOUIS J. BLOCK AT THE AGE OF 55

THE ORGANIZATION OF LITERARY STUDY

THE fashion of the present day demands that in the consideration of a subject we should go back to the dim and semi-illuminated twilight of the world, discover in the chaotic interfusion of many elements the beginning of our theme, and pursue it in its manifold transformations down the progress of the ages. The historical method has cast its fascination around us, and we shall in vain attempt to evade the influence. Yet we may not unreasonably have some doubts as to the correctness of the procedure, and in view of the results attained refuse to give an absolute adherence to all its requirements. When the study of morality is reduced to the relation of atoms, or centers of force, or the gyrations of mollusks, one may well admit that the subject has reached its lowest terms, and admire the dexterity with which complex activities are brought out of such simple conditions. As one watches the process, one is irresistibly led to the conclusion that the facile operator has an indefinite fund of invisible resources to draw upon, and substitutes for the meager beginning a rich and superb combination, which he had little occasion to anticipate. The apparent ease of the change, the pleasure arising from the resumption of large measures of life in such slender vessels, and the power acquired with considerable ease of developing a system of similar transmutations for ourselves, hold us bound to the effort and the success.

In the opening of Sidney Lanier's remarkable book on

elements in various literatures, and the subsequent revolt, which assuredly we had every reason to expect; and so connections of varying extent and strength have been duly pointed out to us.

Again, the story of literature has been the story of individuals; a succession of heroic figures has moved before us, and unto them have been awarded different degrees of praise or blame. The eventualities of lives in the main devoid of startling or romantic interest have been reproduced with minute and patient fidelity, and in not a few instances have been properly held up as effective deterrents from conduct not entirely harmonious with certain widely accepted canons. These persons have usually been credited with the possession of an occult quality called genius, any attempt to define which has resulted in manifold passages of eloquent and picturesque writing, which unhappily left the subject involved in a softly colored mist of words so alluring as to forbid hard-hearted attempts at a search for a possible significance. These illustrious ones followed each other chronologically, had in some instances probably met and conversed, had written a certain number of books, and achieved a certain distinction. They were in a manner ticketed and classified; some of them were supreme in a kind of work which they had created and had left in such a condition as to render competition with them a hopeless task for all time to come; others were relegated to an inferior rank, although perhaps they had done a few things in a way strictly unsurpassable. There has been one effort, however, which has been elaborately pronounced sinful and abhorrent: interpretation of the books made by the great masters has been the unpardonable offense; literary productions

appealed exclusively to the feelings, and in the joy or tenderness or delirium evoked by them one must be content to remain; there might be desultory discussion of literary forms and methods, but the lovely product must be subjected to no analytical disintegration; the thought of man must be studiously eliminated from the discussion, and the rose left on its stem undespoiled of a single petal and undesecrated of a single evanescence of perfume.

Then the subject was neatly divided into epochs: often these served merely as stimulants to a faltering interest and aids to a relaxing memory; the principle of division was so elusively various that the total externality of the framework could not fail to make itself apparent even to the casual observer. The literature of the monarchy was severed by rigid bars of distinction from that of the republic; the great influence of government upon the art of the times was seriously and continuously indicated; the freshness of the earlier writer was laboriously and suggestively contrasted with the languor and jaded refinement of later schools. These schools also came in for a somewhat redundant share of comment and attention; it might be difficult always to say what was the exact relationship between writers so diverse as were often claimed as members of a school, but the fact of there being such an intimate association between them was not to be brought into question. Caution was rightly and at frequent intervals given against supposing that these epochs of schools were anything real in the history of the times; nor were they to be taken too literally or accurately; one epoch shaded by invisible degrees into the next and gave to the new a fringe or skirt of color from the old, forming a series of interesting and fluctuating iridescences down the entire

course of the narrative; often one school sprang full armed from the head of another, ready for homage and conquest. The fabric usually bore upon it the unmistakable marks of its contriver. A distinguished mathematician once said that the time was probably coming when everyone would have his own algebra or calculus; it was evident that the time was already here when everyone had his own account of literatures.

Moreover, as said before, a physical origin must be found, or we should be left without a solid foundation and a consistent body of scientific terms. Climate, geographical configuration, alternation of hill and valley, proximity to the sea, and endless hosts of particulars were not far to seek. The somewhat generally accepted principle that like causes produce like effects appears to have been held in secure abeyance in these speculations, as climatological conditions which during one period produce outbursts of creative genius, where mankind yet drink as at exhaustless fountains of spiritual refreshment, and during others fail to bring the smallest response from a people living in a stolid abasement which makes them an easy prey to every incursion of their more active neighbors.

Also elaborate accounts of prevalent modes of thought, shifting currents of opinion, predominant phases of feeling, impassioned incentives to wide activities, found a large place and attention. The physical basis here appears in a condition of considerable attenuation; it has receded so far from the view within; in fact it often is entirely forgotten except as recurrence is made to it now and then in deference to its supposed although not wholly understood importance.

Now unquestionably all these elements have their place

and importance, and their unification must be found if an adequate idea of literature is to be discovered: all life descends from the idea; it is in the idea that all particularities have their subsistence; it is in it that they live and move and have their being. A literature is not a thing extraneous to the life of a nation; it is but one of the many ways in which that life finds adequate expression; it grows with the unfolding of the national thought, and declines with the decadence of the national will; as nation after nation in the torch-dance of history bears the flambeau that for the time sheds illumination upon the steep and rocky path whereby humanity makes its ascent to the fruitions beyond, so literature after literature arises from the indwelling thought of the time and makes a permanent representation for posterity. With the process of the ages literatures spring from the soil belonging to them, increase into marvelous expanse of foliage, bear their appropriate blossoms and fruit, and in passing away enrich the space from which subsequent growths are to emerge. They belong to the living thought which produces them, and that thought includes as means to the fulfillment of its needs the physical conditions which it selects as appropriate to it, the multifarious opinions of men, their mutable wishes and longings, their deeds slender or wide-reaching.

The comparative study of literatures has made impossible the merely subjective consideration of them; they are seen to be a growth and in fact but one growth. But we are again confronted with the notion that the complex and rich results of later periods are to be reduced to the thin abstractions of the earlier; explanation in general seems to find a curious satisfaction in divesting the object of all that constitutes its

essence, and then to hold up the frail and meaningless shade as the source from which all the splendid manifestations have come. The explanation of a history or a literature is not to be found in its bare and meager beginnings but in its progress, which has led it by ways straight or devious to its truest consummations, which were before it began to be and which will survive its passage back into the potentiality from which it arose. Providence is before us as well as behind us, and what is to be is the fruitful strength which made the past what it was.

The tentative stages of literary effort point forward to the fuller ones in which their results are resumed and given a meaning which in themselves they do not possess. The savage standing in the midst of an assemblage of his fellows and pouring forth his rude and spontaneous chant is but a poor foreshadowing of the great rhapsodes who were to come after him. Much significance is hardly to be found in these wild efforts, and their importance to a satisfactory treatment of the history of literature is not to be overestimated. In themselves they are of meager and subordinate worth; in the light of subsequent achievements they obtain a value which is in the main a reflection from these. The historical genesis of literature gains as much illustration from the end which is before it as from the vague mixture of endeavors which are behind it. The ideal is the source of activity as well as the real, and the unachieved originates the transformation leading to the higher and nobler.

In fact we find vast periods of history which are, as it were, preparations for the genuine labors of mankind. The literature of the tribe or clan has importance, inasmuch as it indicates the path pursued by the race in attaining that self-

knowledge which alone makes high successes possible. As literature it, of course, possesses very little value, whether viewed from the side of content or form. Theoretical considerations must, however, constantly guard themselves by a recurrence to the real movements of things, or they lose themselves in vagaries unsusceptible of verification. The union of fact and thought must be brought about if the truth is to be reached; the speculative and evolutionary theories are the two sides of the whole which are to be seen in their living interchange and connection.

With the organized city, however, real civilization begins, and literature inevitably tends to assume the proportions which belong to it. Relations entered into with adjacent cities would constantly tend to the overleaping of boundaries, and a widening of interest and a clarification of expression would ensue. The local peculiarities would be a vanishing element in a finer product responsive to larger and deeper needs. With national literatures the process must be similar. They must constantly widen their scope, and open receptive minds to larger conceptions, and enter the domain from which no man is excluded and where all are equally great and owners of all. The true literature, therefore, to which all progress looks, and in which all effort culminates, is a literature wide as the race, and holding within its grasp whatever has been done of excellent and wise.

This endeavor is one of the great appanages of the race. The endeavor belongs to man as man, and he would be less than himself if he did not thus manifest himself. However much the form which this large and mighty work takes may be conditioned by the environment in which it occurs, the impulse itself is above all environment, and makes of the

latter simply an instrument of expression. The scenery of Greece is reflected in the poetry of Greece, the rocks and snows of the Northland appear in their songs; the less-unfolded peoples produce the poems of smaller reach and lighter meaning; but the literary effort itself is not relative to any exterior condition, and displays often the fullness of its power in the simplest chants and ballads. The form of literature may be dependent upon the conditions in which it saw the light, but its content is the same all the world over in the degree in which that content has been seized and understood.

The literature of all the ages is therefore one literature; from the universal mind of man it springs in response to its imperative need of expression, and the world of things is but the succession of symbols, as it were, which it converts into vessels of its emotions and intentions. However large the labor required for the accumulation of the material necessary for the study of literature in this sense, the beginning has already been more than made. A band of critics has already appeared whose interest in the great works of the great men is no longer confined to questions of style, or skillful construction of story, or happy combination of heterogeneous matter, or brilliant coruscations of audacious wit. A body of students must come to the front who will penetrate to the creative idea, molding and upbuilding the poem or novel, and find that idea only part and parcel of a greater one molding and upbuilding the world itself.

Successive literatures are each embodiments of the thought underlying all literatures. The nation is the genuine unit of history, and the deepest national idea is the genuine unit of literary history. The great tasks of the really world-historical

peoples are reflected completely in their literatures. These latter belong to the steps by which the world has ascended to an adequate consciousness of itself. They emerge from the profoundest thought of their time, and in reproducing that thought unto itself both classify it and make it more comprehensive. The various phases of life in largest measure dramatize themselves on the stage of time, and humanity learns what is its innermost substance by looking backward at what it has done. It is not, however, confined to a study of what it has done; it also leaves a precious reflection of itself in its works of the imagination. History and literature are two aspects of the one truth, the outer of deed and movement and success, the inner one of aspiration, of motive, of recognition of the ideal.

But again, no one literature is all-inclusive; it is but a single leaf from the giant redwood in which all the generations have room to dwell, but one pulse of the mighty heart which gives life to all that is. A study of it shows forth its limitations, which find their reason and elucidation elsewhere. They must all be considered together if any one is to be understood. Their union, however, is an organic one; a union depending upon an active principle which assigns to each its place and function in a system which, like the human body, is subservient to a high intent in its every detail. In the Platonic sense it has the ideal dwelling within it, and conforming to a model which is in the heavens. As through the ages there runs an increasing purpose, so through all literatures there runs an illuminating intelligence growing brighter with the process of the suns.

In literature intelligence addresses intelligence. It has, therefore, constructed for itself a material which is itself a

product of the spirit to which it appeals. Architecture may try to tell its story with such adequacy as belongs to it in granite or marble. Painting may reproduce an action in light and color; even music uses a tone to which clings the last vestige of a disappearing externality; but in literature spirit has made for itself an instrument which is spiritual.

In language, thought finds the medium which is thoroughly plastic to its demands, which affords a means of expression to its most attenuated abstractions, which has movement, vigor, life, variety, color, and in whose very structure and interrelatedness of parts are seen again the articulations which bind ideas together, and make of them one harmonious world.

Through ages there reigns a division of labor; the functions of nations vary as the organs of the human body have their separate place and action. Swedenborg figures the life of society as a grand man: some people occupy the place of the brain, some of the hands and feet. The allegory has its import and relevance. The development of great literatures has not been given to all, and it is important to find the true line of descent and succession. The lesser achievements are contained in the greater, and a study of the latter is really inclusive of the former. One must needs follow the stream directly on its course, and not be led astray into windings which really lead nowhere. The great movement of the peoples contains the secret of which we are in search, and whose discovery opens the realms whither aspiration climbs.

Moreover, that which is important in the past is the permanent, that which remains to-day and has a life which may be called a real one. Some literatures are of interest principally to the anthropologist or the student of antiquities.

They hold an important but a subordinate position. There are literatures which are perennially alive. They are as close to modern interest as to that of the way which saw them bloom and prosper. The necessity here is of finding the due relation, of giving to each the measure which belongs to it, of not neglecting the lesser nor aggrandizing the higher. The preparatory stages demand to be fully mastered, but the truest results are to be obtained from the finished and the perfect. The literature of Greece means more to us than the vast array of productions which the Orient has of late years yielded up to a persistent search and attention.

The life of the race has revealed itself in varying literatures with varying completeness. There are, however, epochs in which seem to assemble all the elements which belong to all being, and present themselves with the chiefest intensity that belongs to them. These are turning points of history, in which are gathered all rays from the achievements that have been, to be poured in full radiance on the to-morrow just at the point to arise. To these periods belong the works which are continent of the whole thought then moving in the sphere of things, and the additional potency which is to unmake the present and substitute for it a fuller revelation of the old yet ever new truth.

These men are the true bearers of genius; they are held of a genetic power which is a solvent of the world that is and a framer of a succeeding nobler condition. They are like the heroes described by Hegel in his *Philosophy of History,* who derive their purposes and vocation not from the existing order, but from a concealed fountain, from that inner spirit, still beneath the surface, which tears the outer shell in pieces, and on its ruins erects a new world. Genius is therefore a

complete absorption in the purpose of the time, and a true instrument of destiny. The works which they leave behind them are the epitome and chronicles of the ages, the embodiment of the truest that has been thought and the best that has been hoped by the maturest of mankind. These works are the models from which artistic procedure must take its departure, and are the mean which nature makes in order by that mean to rise above herself.

The development of literary forms follows the method which has been indicated before. The whole of history has been likened to the progress of a day, from the burst of sunrise through the splendor of noonday to the gray tints of evening. There must be added the morning twilight before the separate hues have differenced themselves from each other into greater or less distinctness. These earliest productions can hardly be said to be either prose or verse. They have no predominant rhythmic quality of any high kind, and their imagery is both vapid and confused. The monotonous chants of savages are not yet music. They really contain implicit in them all forms of literary art. They are at the same time songs and narratives and dialogue, but these are so mingled that neither has the preëminence.

But there ensued the widening of experience and the spectacle of good and far-reaching achievements. The growth of civilization and its marvels enchain the attention and evoke enthusiasm. The deeds of the heroes who penetrate the depths of distant lands or launch the keel upon the treacherous and unknown waters inflame the hearts of singer and seer. The conquest of vast areas hitherto uninhabitable, and the bringing of various peoples into communication, awaken the energy which impels to victory over the visible

world. The rise of institutions and the beginning of arts; the introduction of letters, the growing consciousness of a nobler life, superinduced upon the merely material one and dominating it, bind the deepest convictions of the advancing generations to beliefs and consummations which are the recognized conditions of their movement forward and upward. The narration of these wonders becomes an irresistible impulse, and the rhapsodies intone the deeds of the heroes.

But heroes fall into collision; they are representative of different principles, each claiming the supremacy for itself and the subservience of its antagonists. Indeed, the bulwarks which man has erected for the support of the truer thought, and the opportunity of the nobler activity which has become the center and nerve of his existence, show themselves to be unstable. The institutions of the time fall into conflict, and each asserts its right to an unconditional recognition of its claims. These conflicts often appear insoluble; they terminate in death and dismay. The wisest are held by their fascination, and he is the seer who can behold over them and encircling them the realm which admits the preservation of both contestants in just subordination and union. The dialogue steps forth upon the scene and thrusts the narrative into the background.

Hence arises the voice of individual feeling. Often it may utter only vague caprice or momentary desire; it may be only the expression of shallow delight or trivial sorrow, but it may be the deepest conviction of the era, the thought, the hope, which are latent in all men and make themselves heard through one. What was implied in the seed of the early choral chant has become apparent in the perfected fruit. Monotony has given place to rhythmic variety, the obscure

and turgid to the clear and delicately outlined. Not merely the general emotion underlying the combination of men into institutional groups glows into manifestation, but that general emotion filling the individualized spirit, who in giving it outer clothing and investiture avows to it his devotion and allegiance.

The transition is made to reflection and analysis. The singer begins to look back on his own methods and those of his forerunners. The thoughts which have been filling him with their power and multitude, and which have woven for themselves a garment that seemed but themselves externalized, rise before him and solicit attention in their own capacity, and apart from the forms which they have assumed in their ardor of telling them. Those forms also appear in abstraction from their content, those forms which it seems almost as cruel to subject to any dismemberment as to tear a flower to pieces or disfigure a beautiful human body. But the step backward cannot be taken; the demands of the purely intellectual life are paramount, and with the analytic tendencies of thought the writing of prose begins, and art becomes conscious of itself.

Throughout the process there has been another and deeper movement going on — the progressive deepening of consciousness itself — the gradual rise and development of the knowledge of personality. The recognition of personality is more than personality itself; spirit, from its nature, is personal; it is made up of actions, instincts, emotions, reasons, imaginations which are but varying forms of one life; but the realization of personality, the appreciation of what is its due, the recognition of its infinite worth, has been the toil and struggle of history, and the message of literature. In so

far as a literature has fulfilled this function has it been great, and it is through this common effort to reveal what is found in the struggle to attain genuine freedom that it is united with other literatures and transcends the merely natural limits within which it is set. All literatures are joined in the effort to attain a comprehension of free spirit, and it is from this point of view that they are susceptible of classification and connection.

The immense literatures of the Orient are in the shadow. In them the consideration of man as man has only begun. He is made the mere natural outgrowth of a central power, as it were, or rigidly held down in limits into which he has not produced himself. His whole life is exterior to himself. All great and good deeds have been done before he comes on the plane of action, as in China, or nobility belongs inalienably to a class from which he is debarred by his birth, as in India. The transitions from these extremities are made through Persia and Egypt. Among the Hebrews arises the light which has been given to all mankind to illumine the path into the heavens. But in the Orient, man is everywhere subject to an outer dominance, the object darkens over him with its vast preëminence, an alien sovereignty subdues and encircles him. These are the literatures of the preponderance of the object — the literatures of despotism.

The literature of Greece is full of radiance. The rule of the one has passed away, and the rule of the many has come. The outer world frowns no longer, but lends itself adequately to the labors of the race. The intrepid pioneers of civilization have tamed the earth, and she is yoked already to the chariot of the conquerer. Man finds himself at home amid the olive groves and hills and seas of his new dwelling-

place. The morning song of self-recognition rises unto the sun, the Apollo who had known what it was to toil side by side with the shepherds, and who did not forget the charm of human companionship. The world of the soul confronts the realm of nature and both are conjoined in a harmony that is itself the beginning of all music. This is the literature of the equilibrium of the object and subject — the literature of the many.

In Rome thought began to look within itself. Life was no longer a holiday, but became a succession of difficult deeds, which were under the eye and rule of a relentless will. Another realm began to disclose itself within that joyance which had been the constant possession of the dwellers of the Ionian archipelago. That finished product of instinct and insight in happy and miraculous fusion was too frail to enclose the new spirit, and the exquisite vase was shattered. Christianity came, the humblest and most patient of conquerors. In Alexandria, the East and the West came into a union whose offspring were to change the face of the known world. The whole sphere of the inner life, the soul with its lofty aspirations, its high demands, its heavens and its hells, as the completion of the deeds done in the body, its recognition of its infinitude and its goal — the living of the infinite life — arose on the general vision, and new languages, new arts, new poetry, began. We have arrived at the great middle age, the literature of the preponderance of the subject — the literature of the transition from the rule of many to the rule of all.

The spiritual life with its inalienable demands relegates the natural life not merely to a place of subordination, but to a place of utter obliteration. Moreover, by a curious inver-

sion of its true character, it seats itself upon a throne of temporal power, and suffers a degradation to pure naturalism. Out of the conflict which ensues arise the modern nations and the readjustment of the claims of Church and State. The despised realm of the outer reasserts its validity with strenuous success, and springs into marked prominence. The sciences of nature are the outcome. The old Greek achievement is studied anew, the western seas give up their secrets, the life of the whole orb becomes one life, and modern civilization is at the helm. There appears the literature of the organic union of the subject and object, the literature of the rule of the all — of the true republic, last and best birth of Time.

De Quincey makes a distinction between the literature of power and literature of knowledge. But all writings worthy of the name are both possessed of power and full of knowledge. If they had not the former they would be useless, and if they had not the latter they would be valueless. One would prefer to make a distinction between expression and instruction. The purpose of a poem is not to give information, although it may be filled with it to repletion, nor is it directly intended to serve high moral ends. When writings become instructive of forethought and intention, they enter a field which is not the purely literary one. Literature uses the noblest instrumentality yet fashioned by man for the purpose of expressing the idea. Expression it seeks for its own sake, with adequate expression it rests, and in the contemplation of the beauty created it finds its high pleasure. Writings whose aim is instruction belong to religion or philosophy.

Literature, however, does not seek expression merely as

such. That would be to lose itself in the intricacies of verbal finish and the niceties of purely external polish that adorn those productions which are the wonder of the day, and then await the research of the antiquary, to refurbish their tarnished splendors. Art for Art's sake is not to be understood to refer exclusively to that goldsmith's minute chiseling whose deepest touch goes but very little below the surface. Literature is not merely the art of saying things well, but far more the art of saying great things greatly, even though there may be whole periods whose contribution to the permanent equipment of the race is but a superbly carved cameo or a delicately tinted miniature. Literature demands a noble content so nobly told that in its contemplation we rest satisfied. That content has in all ages been the same, and the absoluteness of literature consists in its giving garb and beauty to the indwelling thought of the world. The unfolding of freedom in its varying stages has been the life which has permeated the poetry and the artistic prose of all time. The deepening of personality, the recognition of its universality, the establishment of its supremacy, the belief in its everlasting unity with the Divine, has been the motive which has given birth to all great works, and has been the purport of their message. That all men possess freedom, that the ways must be found by which this freedom can be assured to all men, is a hope which has been the very center of what is usually called genius. From the depths of the Divine Spirit have the great literatures come, and they have shone with such light as was given them.

As there is but one mind in all history, so there is but one literature. Special literatures, so-called, find their reason and explanation in that one literature, which has revealed to man

the innermost of his life, the height of his destination, the Providence which has presided over every step of his advance. His face has been ever toward the rising sun; from the Orient to that Occident which is at the same time the Orient the course of truth and empire has gone. The one universal mind which holds in its unity all the eras of the world and of an infinite array of worlds, has found expression in many ways; not least of these is the one made in language, and all literatures are truly the self-revelation of the Infinite Spirit, who has never left any man or age without an avenue of approach to Himself.

MODERN LANDSCAPE PAINTING

THE world of art is a world of reflections. As in some magic mirror, phase after phase of human life and experience glitters across that polished surface and gives place to others, subtler and nobler as the ages proceed. For whatever the past has done, and to what extent soever certain aspects of expression, whether in words or marble or color, have been carried to their limits, and exhausted in the entire range of their possibilities, yet to each perfected flower and fruit as it hangs and glows on the marvelous tree of time, another succeeds which touches deeper sensibilities, presents the story of the everlasting idea in a newer and more seductive guise, discloses depths of nature and heart and mind the earlier artists dreamed not of.

The history of art is the history of the human soul. The babbling infant, ages ago, sought to sing to itself its thought of the world that it saw around it, and the abyss that it felt within it; the religious tales of the older time remain as a precious heritage to these latter years; successively the deep heart of humanity has told to itself in vast piles of architecture, or wondrously chiseled marble, or passionate commixture of colors, the old, old story of its hopes and aspirations, its beliefs and its convictions, its worships and its venerations. To understand these progressive manifestations of human power and tendency, to grasp them in their unity and intention, is to learn a lesson in the comprehension of the world.

The art of the world has developed in a series of progressive phases which are manifestations of the successive unfolding of the human spirit. The environment in which humanity dwells overshadows at first with its immensity and vague generality the earlier efforts of intelligence. Complete consciousness and separate understanding of the self as opposite, and in a measure antagonistic of the world, both natural and spiritual, are ripe developments of the spirit, and only attained after ages of struggle and resistance. The human soul confronted by this vast and moving spectacle, which we have learned to call the universe, swoons back as it were into unity with it, and can only murmur inarticulately and dimly its reverence, its fear, and its hope of enswathement in universality, and consequent freeing from the torments of growing individuality. The Oriental peoples illustrate fully this tendency. To them the flight of time meant so little that they have developed no consistent histories of their progress and advancement. They lived in a luxury of the imaginative consciousness, an ecstatic half-slumber, in which their personality was continually on the verge of extinction into the all-Nirvana, as the Buddhist devotee calls it, in which somehow mystically without volition of his own the illimitable potencies of the universal life sway through him, and the thin shell of his distinctive personality is a constantly obliterating shadow before the splendor of the All-light that is to suffuse him. Nature to such minds had no separate existence, and could therefore be neither an object of representation or study. In that twilighted consciousness the exquisite form of tree and flower and cloud floated, bathed in the irradiation of an idealising tendency, but always as an accompaniment of the wished-for

realization, the breaking down of the barrier of the self before the imposition of the larger life, that had neither limitations nor characteristics such as constitute the essence of things we know by the processes of the reason. Government under such spiritual conditions could only be a tyranny, history only baseless and capricious transference of power from dynasty to dynasty, each as irresponsible and as little devoted to human amelioration as its predecessor. In such a dream-life, art could only manifest itself in massive and symbolic structures, whose chief significance lay rather in another formalizing of the one idea of unity with the All, the divine, the universal, than in any specific content of its own.

To the Greek the problem presented itself anew, and with fairer chances for a successful solution. In his rocky peninsula, sea-girt and island-girt, life put on a severer face, and spurred to loftier achievements. The awaking from the dream became inevitable. Under those sapphire skies, and fanned with the glorious salt winds of the neighboring sea, overlooked by the solemn mountains, and urged by the intractable soil, face to face with Mother Earth, who offered her gifts of subsistence and leisure only to strenuous effort, confronted by hordes of Orientals who came upon them like devastating swarms of locusts, and engaged in heroic rivalries with each other, that people could do nothing less than be aroused to an appreciation of what humanity was, and how nobler than the environment was the human heart that pulsated beneath each fleshly covering. It was the morning song of joyance and delight, when humanity first knew itself, and the darkness of the night fled never to return as it had been. Freedom, clearness, ecstasy became the appanage

of the human spirit. The noblest study of man was man. Human individuality was recognized as the ground of history, and the basis of progress. Art reveled in this discovery as never before or since. With a passion of pleasure she plunged into the novel realm, and produced her splendors of creative success, which can be neither equaled nor surpassed. Out of her marble quarries, she evocated those representations of humanity which glitter through all the ages as white miracles embodying the perfection of human naturalness. She placed on hilltop and acropolis harmonies of line and proportion, which were as unconsuming beacon-lights to all the nations, proclaiming the worth of individuality, gloriously finished as the outer temple, in which it was worshiped. She sang her deathless songs of the greatness of the heroes who ploughed the unknown seas like the Argonauts, in search of the golden fleece, conquest of the unknown world that darkened around her, or she hymned the worth of human perfection in the Achillean demand for sufficient recognition, or in the victory of Ulysses over the weltering wastes of ocean and tumultuary disaffection at home, or in the sacrifice of human life at the shrine of beauty, beauty so transcendent that all claim of conscience or government or domestic attachment shriveled before its flame like flax or paper. But to her, Nature was only as an orchestral accompaniment to the grander human chorus. Her sculptors had no need of other background than her silver-wooded mountains, and pale blue sky arched over foam-flowered waters. Painting had a beginning, to be sure, as a separate art, but landscape painting had no sufficient motive in the national idea. Even descriptions of nature are rare in Greek poetry, and are never introduced as in modern

times for their own sake, but as accessories to the human emotion that underprops them. Indeed, to a Greek, nature as such was unworthy of real attention; except as accompanying the special myth to be represented, she was unfit to be made the subject of a serious artistic effort.

Genuine landscape painting, it must be seen from what has been said, could in those days have barely raised its first slender stalklet and leaf above the soil. The conditions for its successful prosecution did not exist. We have accounts of painters, who had made large advances in their art; the secrets of perspective and light and shade were not unknown to them, but the art as such was barely rising above the horizon of human consciousness. The world had yet many steps to take before she reached the plateau whence nature shone back to her as a reflex and symbol of all her strivings, and therefore a marvelous material for the expression of her deepest moods and most graceful fancies.

But the Greek seized his solution wholly on the natural side. Life to him was the joyous equipoise of man and nature, the happy flow of thought into sense, and the transfiguration of sense into thought with no consciousness of the depth of spirituality involved in his own being and destiny. While upon the earlier civilization destiny and the movement of things pressed like a weight no effort could alleviate or lessen, there came with the bursting of these bonds the delightful consciousness that man and nature were natural complements of each other, that achievement and manifestation, hope and realization, were the opposite faces of the same shield, that to think was to be, and that existence was not to be conceived without thought. His perfect art is but the necessary expression of this equilibrium attained once

and once only on the earth. He and his work are the "one thing finished in this hasty world."

But the content of life could not rest here; summit after summit loomed yet to be climbed, outlook upon outlook shone in the growing illumination of the everlasting day of the world, yet to be reached, whence life assumed an aspect far other than had been surmised or anticipated. It is the glorious privilege of the race thus forever to tread upon exaltations which the previous realization hinted or but vaguely foreshadowed. We cannot tell whither the next opening of the doors of time will lead us, into what realms of splendor we are advancing, upon what new scenery our eyes are yet to open.

Suffice it to say here that individuality had been recognized as the counterpoise and coequal of nature. The eyes of the nations had been directed within, and the depths of spirituality were now to be explored. The Roman is the incarnation of will, resistless, unvanquishable will. But he is essentially prosaic; he has no art of his own. He has wit enough to borrow from his neighbor the Greek, and make him subservient to his luxury and caprice. His view of the landscape is that of the kitchen garden; his poetry is didactic and tells us how to cultivate the soil and get the most abundant crops. But yet the will is the deepest internality of man, and the step forward has been taken. The whole world of the inner life, the secrets of the heart and conscience, the mazes of human aspiration begin to dawn upon us. Heaven lies within us; and now for the first time the outer fades from the view, is looked upon as a mean and degrading accessory, is relegated to the limbo where dwell the evil and satanic potencies. As formerly nature and life had been seized abstractly and

as all dominating, so now the soul of man is looked upon as the only verity, and the environment, the life outside and around, sinks into the shadow of disrespect and depreciation. But such abstraction could not last long; nature must re-assert herself; once more the soul and the world confront each other; but with deepened content. As the soul had grown richer by the contemplation and knowledge of itself, so nature forced into relief has become an abyss where the student might spend his days and nights and never come to an end with his ceaseless meditations. But to the artist, nature is now the symbol of that which is rarest and noblest in the heart of man; he can contemplate her in her separateness, and yet give her that human interest without which no art product can be successful. Nature is to him but undeveloped man; all the contents of the soul are mirrored in her restless movement, in her vast and heaving waters, in her night glittering with stars, in her valleys encircled by her snowy mountain peaks.

We see the growing sentiment of nature in the works of the old painters. Giotto released the human figures from the gold background into which the Byzantine painters had sunk them. The artist could not resist the charm of this innovation; he began to hollow the distances in which his personages were placed, and spend his loving care upon the depth of sky or green expanse of field or meadow which engirt his creations. Perspective, which, had, with the rest of the learning of the Greeks, been submerged for a time in the deluge which had destroyed the ancient world, was re-discovered, and a whole vision of unachieved possibilities crowded upon the apprehension. It was thus that " with the beginning of the fifteenth century, there appeared a new

and independent development of painting, which aims more universally at a powerful conception of nature, at a more radical study of form, and at a more complete perfection of coloring and perspective." So in the attempt of the artists of the fifteenth century it often happens, that " the incident is no longer the main matter, but it serves them, as it were, with a pretext for the life-like conception and representation of reality. Hence they place their figures in rich landscape scenes, and delight in magnificent architectural backgrounds, introducing their own contemporaries, in the costumes of the day, as interested witnesses of important events."

Thus spirit has traveled through the long course of ages, and discovered its own depth and significance, and thus too nature, the opposite of spirit, has been thrust into bold antithetic relief, and become a genuine object of study and contemplation. But while nature has thus been found to be the opposite of spirit, yet this antagonism is resolved into unity, inasmuch as, threading nature, and converting it into a systematic interplay of potencies, are found laws whose significance is perceived only by viewing them as forms of rationality, of the infinite reason. Nature and spirit are thus but opposite manifestations of one substance, and the former reflects the latter throughout its breadth and extent. To the artist nature becomes in truth the garmented form of his idea, the visible reality in which are already imbedded the thoughts, the emotions that constitute the very essence of his being. He has to study reality, pass it through the alembic of his imagination, and it emerges the transfigured expression of his profoundest thought; no longer mere natural beauty, but the beauty bathed in the light that never was on land or sea. It is noticeable that with the rise and growth of

landscape painting, appear the first great achievements of natural science. Galileo asserts that the earth moves; Copernicus rejects the old astronomy and places the sun in the center of the system; Kepler discovers the golden secrets of the stars; astrology vanishes into the mists of the fore-done and finished; alchemy gives place to chemistry, and the Healing Art studies the human body, and begins its genuinely philanthropic mission. The reason for this parity of appearance is the same; nature is first seen as she really is, and then studied as she deserves to be.

The content of landscape painting is the same as that of all arts. The human heart in all its varying play of emotions again essays to make a portrait of itself, and again leaves a precious and incomparable representation. There is nothing spiritual that the landscape painters have not endeavored to delineate; their canvases glow with the every hope that has ennobled man, gloom with every fear that has darkened his career. Individual caprices and vast conceptions of whole peoples are shown alike upon these canvases. The progress of the race, the throes of religious anguish, the ecstasy of assured success, the abstraction of the philosopher, look back to us from these radiant comminglings of colors. This world and the next, portrayed so that all who choose may read the old, old story, pessimism and optimism, lyric despair and dramatic collision, degradation and supernal heights of the spirit, glitter before us once more, and the words of hope and the incentive to lofty effort are again the general purport of the message.

The culture of the landscape artist should be of the widest. All science he needs in the fulfillment of the dreams that pursue each other in radiant guise through the precincts of

his imagination. He needs must be something of a geologist to reproduce the soil of valley and mountain, the rocks in all their regularity of arrangement, or contortion in which the play of titanic forces has left them. Into the old myths of giants and titans and monsters, in which are reflected primitive nature views of the early peoples, he must read the deep significance which the rugged, struggling thought of slowly advancing civilization set there. The fondness of Turner for old classical themes, for instance, is not difficult of explanation. By the force of imagination, and a necessary kinship, he thrust himself back into the thought-modes of the Greek or Roman, and the landscape became to him the manifestation of mind processes which were inevitable stages in the development of mankind. As some one has said, no painter can successfully paint an object without in some sort being that object, so the landscapist must sink himself in the spectacle he sees, till from a process analogous to the one that brought forth the real landscape, he ushers into the light of day the resplendent scene he has placed upon canvas. World-life, rocky-formation, river-fluency, cloud-transformations, growth and death of plants, the passion and pathos of semi-articulate animal life, the phases of human motives which are subordinated to natural processes, all these must enter into his conception, not as mere pictures and outer shows, but as real living processes, the essence of whose production he has grasped, so that it is from a creative idea, as it were, that his picture grows upon the canvas. The majestic memory of a Turner needed no studies from which to evocate into visibility his gorgeous mysteries of light and color; nature was to him as a larger body, his soul was akin and fused with the vast potencies whence the everlasting

mountains proceed, and in the solitude of his chamber the ocean in all its vicissitudes, the sky in all its mutations, struggled into view as in the realm of nature herself.

Nature is the inexhaustible treasure house to which he goes that he may forever learn her new moods and phases. She is a language so various, so profound, so creative of ever new glories, that he must forever be near to her or sink into a mere repetition, a soulless echo of his previous achievement. But she is after all a language, a mode of speech, an instrument for the utterance of ever-variant harmonies. The attempt to be merely photographic in the reproduction of natural scenes must be forever a failure. The details of nature herself only glow into significance when related to humanity; what she is in herself alone, apart from the universal mind that perceives her, is one of those philosophic fantasies which haunt certain crude forms of philosophic speculation, so childish as not to recognize that the endeavor to ascertain what nature is, abstracted from the general consciousness, presupposes always the effort of mind that is sought to be eliminated. This language of tree and flower and hill and sky the artist beholds as expressive of thought, and he puts it on his canvas in such guise that all mankind may read. It required his specially endowed susceptibility to discover the secret of the real landscape; he makes it on his canvas plainer to his lesser contemporaries. As has been well said by a French writer:

"The spectacles of nature want the essential characteristic of art, unity. Nature not only varies every moment of the day, but in her infinite complexity, her sublime disorder, she contains and manifests to us that which corresponds to the most contradictory emotions. Capable of exciting these emotions in man, she is powerless to express

them. He alone can render them clear, visible, by choosing the scattered features lost in the bosom of the real, and eliminating from them what is foreign to or contradictory of his thought."

This is far from being the shallow idealism which attempts from a most cursory study of nature to reproduce her beauties and sublimities. It involves the most tender and loving appreciation of her, that penetration into her most subtle and recondite processes which she grants only to her devotee and worshiper.

Says Ruskin:

"All great art must be inventive, that is to say, its subject must be produced by the imagination. If so, then the great landscape art cannot be a mere copy of any given scene."

And William M. Bryant, one of the great authorities on this subject:

"In landscape painting then as in art generally — as in all human endeavor — freedom in the use and choice of materials will always prove co-extensive with the power of the individual to choose wisely and well, and to use rightly and nobly: the artist like every other man realizes for himself a broader and a richer freedom by deepening and widening his individual culture."

All the ardors and glories of the imagination have disclosed themselves in the work of the landscape painter. To a Salvator Rosa, nature is the reflection of moods somber as the darkness of his own soul; to a Claude Lorraine she is fresh with the joyousness of a soul to whom life was a scene of innocence and childlike gayety. Very justly is he said to have been the first landscape painter who set the sun in the heaven of his creations; but that sun had first risen on the horizon of his own soul in the radiant view which his clear

and joyous character took of the world and man. In Turner, on the other hand, all the tempestuous intellectual conflicts of his time are displayed; the attempt to believe what is no longer credible, the attempt to accept what is barely acceptable, the despair of doubt that disdains itself for the lack of power to allay its own torments, and exorcise its self-created ghosts, the moral struggle which leaps from stern asceticism to wildly ecstatic indulgence, and finds satisfaction in neither, with moments of transcendent peace, idyllic and serene as the golden age dreamed of by poets in the foreworld, all shine, and darken, and fascinate in his incomparable portrayals of nature, made to be, as she is, the vehicle of the expression of thought in all its phases.

But the great landscape painter above all perceives the total process of nature, how she perpetually destroys herself only to reproduce herself. He seizes all these aspects in their most permanent and essential form; the capricious, the merely vague, the unimportant, by the instinct resident in his creative skill, he recognizes at once, and drops from his picture. He sees how all nature is resumed and comprehended in the atmospheric process; how, as Emerson says, the mountains are dissolved into the air even as the waters are, how everything is engirt by the mist of its disintegration. Out of this marvelous medium the solidities of the earth are, so to speak, precipitated. The modern painter no longer portrays his object in clear isolation, in a medium crystalline and pure, but as it really is, enveloped in the smoke and vapors of existence. The landscapes of Corot seem like dreams, so pervaded by mists and exhalations are they; but the attempt is here distinctly made to reproduce that total process in which all things live and move and have their being, that

dying into life and living into death to which everything sublunary is subject. These painters introduce the air into their pictures, and lo! the genetic processes of nature become their subject matter and premeditated delineation. Such pictures, seeming irrational agglomerations of light, and shade, and color, are gigantic efforts to throw upon canvas the whole movement of nature's life. No object in them has a definite outline; it flames up into the air, and seems gradually dissipating into space; the golden glow of the universal movement of all things suffuses the delineation, and one is confronted with nature as she really is, eternally passing away, eternally restoring herself.

The art of the landscape painter like music is an essentially modern art, complex, capricious, various, but expressive of the deepest emotions, humane, ennobling. The past after all has not entirely exhausted the range of artistic power as some writers have suggested; the destinies yet hold in their providences some gifts not vouchsafed to the earlier and happier generations; out of the mysterious All whence all things great and noble have come by ways as mysterious as itself, these two, music and landscape painting, have descended in our own times; no doubt the ever fructuant years will continue to give to mankind new powers which will approximate the earth to the loveliness of those dreams, which are unreal only because all reality is contained in them, as the stars disappear in the golden glory of the pervasive light of the daytime.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF MUSIC

IN his book on *Heroes and Hero Worship,* Carlyle left the musician without exposition. He makes amongst others the following statement: "Music is well said to be the speech of angels; in fact, nothing among the utterances allowed to man is felt to be so divine. It brings us nearer to the Infinite; we look for moments across the cloudy elements into the eternal Sea of Light, when song leads and inspires us. Serious nations, all nations that can still listen to the mandate of nature, have prized song and music as the highest; as a vehicle for worship, for prophecy, and for whatsoever in them was divine. Their singer was a Vates, admitted to the council of the universe, friend of the gods, and choicest benefactor to man." Notwithstanding this tribute, that accords to music the position which its adherents believe that it has eminent right to claim, Carlyle does not give the great musician a place among the heroes who have labored with success in the advancement of the race.

So Emerson, in his *Representative Men,* speaks of the poet and the mystic, the philosopher, the man of the world, and the writer, but he proceeds in his discussion in apparent unconsciousness of the claim of the illustrious musician to a share in his eulogies of the benefactors of mankind. On the other hand, however, in George Eliot's novel of *Daniel Deronda,* there appears a pianist and composer, Klesmer, who makes extraordinary demands for due consideration. This figure is generally regarded as being a portrayal of

Anton Rubenstein; and he arrogates to himself an assured position among the great men of his period, who mold public opinion and give form and character to the age to which they belong.

It has taken music a long time to come into its own. It is the last of the great arts to reach its majority and accomplish its task. For sculpture we go back to the Greeks; for architecture we have Egypt and Athens and the cathedral building centuries; for painting we have the times of Raphael and Angelo, Dürer and Rembrandt; poetry, the universal art, belongs everywhere; but music has had a long novitiate, has made a slow and arduous advance through the ages, and has apparently reached its fruition in our own time. It seems strange that it should be so, for, dealing as it does with man's emotional nature, so intimate to his very being, one would suppose that it should have been the first in the series.

And in one sense it has been the first in the series. In response to the varied experiences of the race, simple and characteristic melodies have sprung up everywhere, folk songs, folk rhythms, folk dances. These are as changeable as the skies that called them forth, and they accompany the march of human life with a persistent comment and expression. Love and hate, patriotism and religion and superstition, find in them revelation and criticism. They make a precious storehouse of material for the musician, just as the racial myths have done for the poet, but the development of the distinctive master in the art has been a work of far more difficulty, and when he came he was at first willing to take a somewhat subordinate position. He was willing to put his achievement at the service of the poet or the dramatist or the priest; he was willing to exercise his art

in submission to the noble ritual of the church, or as an accompaniment to the progress of events on the stage, or give a further refinement to the ode or lyric of his brother, who rather looked down upon him as the lesser personage in the partnership. Finally it dawned upon him that his art was as worthy of cultivation in itself as any of the others, that it might celebrate its independence from these, and in fact that it was capable of a realization to which the poet and the sculptor, the painter and the architect, should bring their contribution. Music has thus, wherever it has appeared, had three stages of development: first, its naïve realization in folk song and instrument, next, the elaboration of its resources in subordination to alien expression, and lastly, its emergence as an independent art, and indeed a new synthesis to which voice and poetry and the rest should give loyal allegiance.

This last success was in a measure brought about by the enlargement and improvement of the orchestra. The symphony gave the composer a form of independent music into which he could pour his deepest thoughts, his intensest feelings. The musical art, like the other arts, finally claimed for itself the prerogative of representing life in all its phases and complexities, and a recognition of its great masters equal to that given the master in the other fields of artistic accomplishment. When the next book on heroes and grand men is written, Beethoven will there most assuredly have a place.

If we follow the progress of music, we shall find an increasing apprehension of its capabilities for the expression of the deepest motives, and a growing revelation of its importance in the uplift of man. Wherever music has found genuine lodgment, it took its place at once as an instrument of moral elevation and spiritual insight. Plato has recognized

its extraordinary efficiency and connects musical changes with transformations of the commonwealth. He says: "Music is a moral law. It gives a soul to the universe, gaiety and life to everything. It is the essence of order, and leads to all that is good, just, and beautiful, of which it is the invisible but nevertheless dazzling, passionate, and eternal form." The Pythagoreans developed their theory of the harmony of the spheres, and made instruction in music correlative with the emancipation of the will. Religion everywhere has used music as one of her chief handmaidens and interpreters. Where the voice and exposition of the preacher have failed to bring conviction, the hymn and the sacred chorus have shattered the barriers, and entered the sacred places of the heart with messages of healing and purification. The great musicians have been master instructors, and education has never assumed a more persuasive form than has music.

The great musicians have stood side by side with the benefactors who had achieved most for the advancing rectitude. Palestrina expressed in his motets and in his masses the heights and depths of the Catholic vision, and Dante has no spiritual joys which Palestrina is unable to sing in his luminous medium. John Sebastian Bach needs fear no comparison with any poet of any time; for fecundity of ideas, for sincerity of purpose, for resolute determination to the highest, he belongs with Luther, who knew how close of kin were song and worship. At the time of Germany's most remarkable outburst in literature and art and philosophy, when Kant delivered his epoch-making lectures, and his great disciple, Hegel, bettered his instruction, when Schiller and Goethe spoke as the modern man speaks at his noblest,

Beethoven was no less an expressor of the eternal verities than any one of these. The *Fifth Symphony* with its knock of fate at the door, with its andante of golden aspirations, its scherzo of hope and courage, and its final entrance into the realm of free realization, remains to-day a work of creative art such as the Parthenon must have been in all its glory, one of the few things finished in this hasty world, finished forever. And the *Ninth Symphony,* another apocalyptic vision, has in it elements which are such as the deepest consciousness has ever endeavored to make clear to man for his liberation from the bondages of the material self. The later musicians have followed in the same paths: Wagner with his *Tannhäuser,* the salvation through the ministrations of institutional forces from the passions that emerge from the abyss; Strauss with his *Death and Transfiguration,* a lyric assurance of immortality; Brahms with his great symphonies, a tonic acceptance of the earthly struggle, and a calm foreknowledge of victory. Music, since it has reached its maturity, has thus accompanied the passage of events with its commentary and its solutions just as every great art has. Political transformations, æsthetic developments, social modifications, have found in music a coadjutor who knew well whither the advance was tending.

Music exceeds the other arts in that it compels the listener into a closer intimacy with its enchantments. The rapt hearer becomes the symphony which the orchestra pours into the air around it. The experience of the great man, to whom have descended, as it were, from the empyrean the harmonies which the obedient instruments and voices send out at his command, are our experiences as we give ourselves to them, and we live through in a brief interval the illuminations, the

triumphs, which are not those of a single individual, but which are those of universal man in the attainment of the best that can be. While poetry unquestionably has been above all the other arts the light bringer and the healing physician, music has immersed us in the deepest movements of life. A hearing of true music is thus the passage from one typical elevation to another with a closeness, a certainty, a conviction, which can only be actuality itself. The region in which music dwells is the universal consciousness, which is freedom and wisdom and goodness conjoined in a unity for which no lesser appellation is possible than that of the celestial beauty.

Does music reach our will and our understanding, does it leave permanent results behind it, does it make for character and for righteousness, does it lead to nobility of conduct, which is three-fourths of our being, as Arnold said, whose voice rings in the ears of the generations forever? The questions are answered, if the foregoing statements are subject to complete verification, and the history of music will assuredly furnish such verification. What Novalis said of philosophy can be predicated of music; it gives us God, freedom and immortality. Poetry has made man nobler through the purification of his emotions of fear and pity; the coming to life of Hermione, the return to rightful possession of Prospero, the adjudication of the Pope in the *Ring and the Book,* uplift us into regions where we find ourselves in our true home and dwelling. The *Magnificat* in Liszt's symphonic poem *Dante,* Cesar Franck's orchestral compositions take us up into the same atmosphere of invigorant strength and activity.

In its lighter moods music has given to our vivacities an additional charm and halo. The comedy of England and

France and Germany has had musical illustrations which do not pale when placed beside their prosaic or rhythmical compeers. The *Meistersinger of Nürnberg* will stand the test when placed with the humor of Molière or Shakespeare. The entire production of Mozart — leaving the *Requium* in its melancholy grandeur — is comedy in its best estate, the brilliant recognition of temporal incongruities placed in contrast with the truths of the world, and showing how those darkeners of counsel with all their terrors and swollen self-appreciations and make-believe torments vanish in the splendor of the skies. The world of music is not tragic, the ripple of humor speeds across the sea-mass of its harmonies with ever changing flicker of sunlight or moonlight, the voices that ring throughout its distances of plain and mountain are those of rejoicings over the disappearing tribulations that assail us.

Is music only a kind of supreme pleasure to which we give such interpretation as we bring to it? Is Absolute Music, which is unaccompanied by any verbal text or program, only a series of sounding forms so arranged as to produce the noblest effects? In the development of the art the passage has been made from pure music to program music with its names of movements and its texts, in which the most varied harmonic complexities have illustrated the most recondite themes; the operas of Wagner, the symphonic poems of Strauss, and the works of Vincent d'Indy, show to what extent the musical idealization of such themes has gone; but Mendelssohn refused to give names to his *Songs Without Words* because they were, from his point of view, as clear as any lyrics ever written, and the youth who, when under twenty, could write music for Titania and Oberon, as the

master spirit of the ages saw them, has a right to be heard in his maturity, which was one of learning and wisdom and service. Robert and Clara Schumann, who were in music a pair of wedded lovers like the Brownings in poetry, considered themselves as apostles of a dispensation which was to furnish peace and consolation to those who accepted it. Elizabeth Barrett Browning in her religious devotion to her poetry did not go beyond Clara Schumann. The world of music like the world of poetry contains the noblest inspirations of the noblest souls at the height of their giving, when the Mystery becomes Revelation, and the Master speaks his inmost message with a persuasion that is the invincible allurement of truth and love.

The emotional nature of man in its close relation to the will, overpowering the latter too often with the force of its propulsions, stands as much in need of rational development as the intellect for whose clarification and admission into the established inheritances of truth we have built so many honored institutions. Religion has put forth all its efforts so that the will of the race shall be brought into the avenues which lead to fruitions beyond temporal experiences. For the emotions no discipline can be devised more effective than submission to the enthrallments of music. The emotions have their dialectic as has the intelligence; and the symphony, the sonata, the idyl, calls for the same devotion and interpretation as the drama or the romance or the lyric rapture of the poet. It will be a happy consummation when this is fully recognized, and a man will feel that he needs to know Beethoven and Bach and Brahms as he needs to know Dante and Shakespeare. It will be good for him to trust himself for adventurous voyagings on

"The tide of music's golden sea
Setting towards Eternity."

In a book recently published, the Rev. R. Heber Newton speaks as follows: "Music is not an imitation of nature. Nature provides no ready-made models of melody or harmony, as she provides perfect types of form and color. Hints she gives of music, but only hints. Man evolves music from his own nature. It is distinctively the human art. It comes forth in the awakening self-consciousness of man. Music expresses the awakening self-consciousness of man as he confronts the mystery of the universe, only to find a deeper mystery within himself. The marvelous creations of modern music are studies in self-consciousness; attempts to run the gamut of man's moods, to fathom the problems of his being, to find a voice for

'An infant crying in the night,
An infant crying for the light.'

Music is thus man's interpretation of the mystery of the nature found without him by the secrets of the nature found within him. It is the universe read in the terms of self-consciousness." Moreover we have all heard the music of the spheres in the following passage which brings our tribute to an appropriate close:

"There's not the smallest orb which thou beholdest
But in his motion like an angel sings,
Still quieting to the young-eyed cherubims;
Such harmony is in immortal souls."

THE EVER ANCIENT NEW

IT may happen that a man is the voice of a country or a period. He may stand so related to the thought which is molding the time that, when he speaks, the listener understands the communication is far more than an individual expression of opinion. The world, however, appears to be so constructed that it usually refuses to accord to its prophet the recognition which he feels to be his due. The object which his forth-reaching insight holds up religiously and vehemently may be the emancipation from galling bondages or the prospective enjoyment of various ameliorating conditions, but the recipient of all these benefits proceeds stolidly and indifferently on his ruinous way. Indeed often the person to be loaded with kindness is wholly unconscious of the many disabilities under which he is said to writhe and groan, and refuses to be admitted into the paradise alluringly disclosed before him. Somebody is always sure to find the existing arrangement of things all wrong, and the other person is quite as ready to believe that the method of improvement is the one which general experience has found to be the best, and which gradually but certainly transforms the worse into the better condition, and knows itself to be closely and vitally connected with all that has gone before it. To fly in the face of the antecedents which have made us what we are, is, on the whole, little conducive to genuine progress, and the various and fiery revolutions which have shed their tremendous glare upon the past are now seen to

be terrible errors, which a better and more deeply informed wisdom hopes to avoid in the conflicts impending or to come. Indeed, our good old grandmother, the mighty past, smiles down upon us benignantly from behind her spectacles, and beneath the shadow of her frilled cap, and is so little affected by irreverent things said about her under her very nose that the large and majestic face shows no ripple across its grand surface, and gazes down with unchanging goodness upon the disbeliever himself.

The literary question is always a great and important one, and curiously enough the litterateur is accustomed to undervalue rather than overestimate its significance. He is very likely to lose sight of the extent of the subject with which he is dealing and content himself with the ascription of high necessity to the field in which he happens to be laboring. When the dramatist appeals to the cold and half attentive public for a juster recognition of his art, he usually assumes that the drama is the chief occupation of the best mind devoted to literary expression, and has, therefore, the supreme right to a full and unprejudiced hearing. Now that the producer of short stories has settled himself as a permanent occupant of the most fertile sections of the domain, we are given to understand that a long story is merely a combination of short ones, and as the ingenious Mr. Poe some years ago demonstrated to his own satisfaction that an extended poem was a contradiction in terms, it will soon be equally apparent that the novel must go the way of all flesh and receive decent burial in the neighborhood of the moldering great ones of the past. In ways like these the field is narrowed until one discovers that the critic appeared to believe or has brought himself to believe that by literature is meant, let us say, the

brief character sketch or the exquisitely finished lyric poem. The subject thus very easily assumes the proportions demanded by the " great " magazines, and we are not far from the conclusion that nowadays the best that is published has first felt the genial sunlight in those pages, which, unhappily, being limited and frequently bespoken months ahead, can afford but slender opportunity to the " new art," chafing against the restrictions of accepted canons and clamoring for the roughly clad freedom of the prairies or the mountains of the great Northwest. The limitations thus exteriorly imposed on literature do not, however, belong to it in itself, and it is altogether probable that developments yet in prospect and nobler than any which preceded, will claim for themselves again as of old the entire region over which authority has hitherto been exercised. The patient and laborious historian will still send forth his volumes, often quite as interesting as the serial, pride of the magazine, which introduces us into the choice company of Mickey of the slums or Pele of the Hawaiian leper settlement, and the abused long poem will go on to its conclusion as securely as the brief lyric which sings in a way that is *libre* in every sense, and discards wholly attempts to be musical. The scientists of the Future, with their refined and clear expression, will not take kindly to their exclusion from the republic of letters, and will occupy the large spaces, assuredly their own, serenely as in the past. The university professor, dreaded upholder of the antiquated and master of the accumulated wisdom of the past, will be heard as before, and his voice, as always, will advise that moderation in matter and manner which the world in the long run has always received as what it especially wanted and has never willingly let die.

Science, poetry, philosophy, history, criticism of the large objective type, will as hitherto constitute the literature that is to be, and the great writer of novels, whose place is not less than that of the others, will, as he has formerly done, associate himself with these.

Carlyle spent much of his fierce and impatient force in trying to convince us that the art of a nation, verbal or other, was something more than a mere outlet of its exuberant spirits or an ingenious, not to say labored, way of getting a little half-dolorous amusement. One would suppose that his intense demonstration stood in no danger of being forgotten by the generation succeeding him, yet one is sometimes inclined to seek for another burst from that silent voice, and another strangely luminous exposition showing us what lies in the very brain and at the very life roots of all literature worthy to be so called. It seems that a mere individual bent, a veritable idiosyncrasy of an author, however superficially interesting, cannot be trusted to the production of anything that is likely to be permanent. It may be true that the largeness of opportunity which is coming to the author and the growing willingness to hear all sides of a subject impartially discussed will give more immediate impression of variety in the works rising into the light of day, but it will be found, I am sure, that a deeper and more pervasive tendency must underlie all that. The value of literature is in proportion to its representing the deepest facts of all life whatever. Literature is or ought to be one of the humane and civilizing forces of the world, persuasively inculcating those comprehensions which lead in the direction of purer intellectual atmosphere and the predominance of gentler influences. The truth and the whole truth is to be the purport of its delineation, and by

truth no one is to understand merely the combinations of sensible impressions, but that spiritual unity in which all things live and move and have their being. The mere idler in the paths of letters has never received very marked consideration at the hands of his fellow men, but the scientific observer, the philosophic historian, the poetic interpreter of man's finest experiences, has justly held a place not lower than the one accorded to the highest of men. If literature be thus considered as an occupation which is not beneath that of the scientist or statesman, if the place of the great writer is with those whose eyes penetrate to the causative agencies of civilization, and whose words are heavy with import to the race, the setting up of sectional lines and differences becomes singularly inopportune and meaningless. To see the fact just as it is, and to state what is seen with a directness as perfect as can be, has always been the effort of great writers in all ages, and to assume that this is to be a distinguishing characteristic of a " school of writers " (odious expression), which is slowly but surely preparing to pour out upon the world a swarm of writings strange in form, and curious in sentiment, is really to fail to see what literature must be and has always been. After all, how much is local color worth? And how long do these colors put on with such care last? What becomes of wild vagaries in form? What is it in any work which after the lapse of a single generation becomes mere antiquarian splendor which only very high " culture " can make anything of? As for myself I am free to confess that there is much in the newest stories which I have a good deal of difficulty in making out, and which after I have fairly done so, at the expense of some investigation, I hardly find worth the while. So the *Verse Libre*

Anthologies and *Spoon River* seem to me like all the similar efforts in all time: they will have to make good, and it is yet a little too early to make authoritative statements concerning them. What has been said about them remains still in the nature of prediction; when they have securely found their place, we shall know better how to estimate them; to discover what is universally true and to tell it as adequately as possible to the universal mind of man will be the effort of literature in the future as it always has been in the past.

Similar statements must be made in regard to the medium employed. A language grows with great slowness, and the genuine additions made to it at any one time or place are few and far between; in its intimate structure the progress is even less and the development proceeds after a manner in which individual pleasure holds but a very subsidiary position. It is to be said that no change, presented by the audacity or originality of the individual, meets with acceptance unless it falls in with a general tendency of the language that is more than the work of one or many authors. The English of the Atlantic writers of our Great Era sprang directly from the language brought over here by the early settlers, and in its best estate does not differ extraordinarily from the language of England contemporaneous with its productions. Hawthorne and Emerson demanded a medium subtle, dignified, flexible, and refined, and such a medium is the result of combined ages of scholarship and effort. Words carry about with them a wondrous atmosphere of wide association, and the cadences of a great writer and his choice of verbiage bear with them distinctly a part of his message. Lowell, it is true, succeeded in making a dialect burn with invective and flash with a national passion, but after all he

remained in the *Biglow Papers* within a certain limited range of thought and feeling that have indeed the merit of being common to all men, but are common in the same sense that a foundation may be said to be common to the whole house. When he wrote the great ode on the death of Agassiz, he voiced sentiments no less common to all mankind, but they could not have been satisfactorily put into the rougher vehicle. The new writer will not, any more than his predecessors, find it wise to go too far in being very novel or in reproducing the linguistic peculiarities of the special region with which he is to deal. A dialect is either a language in its hopeless decadence on the way to extinction, or a new tongue not yet arisen into full mastery and knowledge of itself. In either case it is clearly unfit for the highest literary expression, and the great successes in that kind only emphasize the conclusion. Burns and Whitcomb Riley accomplish their wonders by submitting to limitations which their genius instructs them to be inherent in their task, and the latter poet in his later years showed a marked propenstiy to abandon the "hoosier" for the poetic language of his race and nation. The new writers will no more use a new English than they will produce a literature which is a something entirely strange and gorgeous and marvelous and which therefore no one will appreciate or understand. Foreign critics, not wiser in this respect than some of their compeers nearer home, curiously still seek from America what their better reason and the juster among themselves know they have no business to expect, and it is worthy of note that here, as in many cases, we come face to face with the brilliant contradiction that we are in one and the same breath told to be true to ourselves and so produce something unheard of be-

fore, and are then condemned for not subjecting ourselves to the methods which have for so long been known to be the best.

Literary revolutions, like so many others which have signalized the movements of the past, only reassert that permanent unity which lies at the basis of both life and letters. There appears to be nothing in the substance of American thought to-day which indicates one of those extraordinary tensions of conflicting elements, when one is forced for the time to choose sides, although he knows that the ultimate result of the battle must be the organic unity of what is best in both. We are only peacefully expressing again, with perhaps greater freedom from mere and ignorant observance of technique, the thought of the time, and we are moreover getting more learned in the method of all revolutions and, knowing the ways of progress, discovering how hopeless and needless are violent efforts to expedite the appearance of the just and the true. At any rate we should avoid the error of the revolutionists who preceded us, and not disown our father and mother because the older peoples do not like some of our erratic ways, and advise us to a course which we, when we have reached the age of discretion, will, to our great surprise, no doubt, find ourselves adopting of our own accord. We may very well be proud of our derivation from Hawthorne and Emerson and Tennyson and Arnold; the last named especially, with his moderation and clearness and sanity, has a good deal to tell us; and Whitman himself in his highest and most permanent achievements does not differ from them, and it is noticeable how in matter and manner even his best approaches their best. And on the whole Shakespeare and Goethe will serve as well for masters as

Ibsen and Tolstoi, and obedience to the historic method of all progress will do no harm, when we knowingly and involuntarily give it allegiance, guarding ourselves against the excesses of more explosive natures, who would destroy all that we have, while they cannot even agree on what would be a satisfactory reconstruction of affairs when the desired individualism and chaos have fully begun.

The insight which makes any literature valuable is not an individual possession. The effort can be made to tear ourselves loose from the manifold relations in which our life is held, but the result will be pitiable and small and undesirable. The eyes with which the poet or the scientist sees are the eyes of all mankind, and his seeing, if it be other than this and merely individual, is of small import even to himself. Every achievement in any department of great and beneficent toil receives its benediction and its utility from the universal interests which appear in it, and the success will not be lessened by a consciousness, full and ample, of this fact. The novelist or poet, if he expects to see life aright, must see it through eyes that are trained with all the refinements of wisdom coming to him as inheritances from the toilers who have lived and died that his sight might be the better and clearer. What would be thought of the astronomer who should end by refusing to use the telescope which combines the inventive skill of a hundred makers of instruments? The world has not been toiling in vain for all these ages, and no man, however great, can afford to go to work without an adequate acquaintance with what has been done by those earlier in the field. Culture is not merely an accumulation of dry and dusty material, stored in libraries, where no one but the pedant disturbs the oblivious repose gradually sinking

down upon it; it is rather power, faculty, penetrative insight, comprehension; and the new writer or the new literature needs to be warned, lest like the foolish Roman, he rush into the Senate House with the superfluous information that the sun has arisen. Surely no literature ever set up this claim to recognition before, that it knew and cared nothing about the great forerunners, and it proposed to accept no aid in its performances except such as itself had made. Civilization, difficult task as it has proved to be, would indeed have found its labor impossible if each age had to contrive all over again everything that its predecessor had already accomplished. The average man may now find his picture delineated at full length in the gallery of art, but if the work of art itself be merely average, we shall not especially care for it, simply because it was produced yesterday in Chicago or Seattle. The earnest writer will not fail to perceive that the faultless art of Sophocles and the divine harmonies of Dante are nearer and more central to the noblest work he can do than the vague and pessimistic echoes of a decaying French style of story that cares more for the exact noun precedent to the proper verb than it does for any portrayal of life, high and worthy. Individuality may all be very well, but what is it in reality save a sincere and profound understanding of the great questions which interest all men? No doubt there is much that is taken at second hand, there is much said that is a mere echo of somebody else, there is a large ambition to do what another has done, there is rarely the power of really seeing and saying the deep things which need constantly to be said. If by individuality is meant, therefore, that the mature writer must express what he has in truth felt and thought, that he must not merely reproduce what some vehe-

ment and energetic writer has just been sounding into men's ears, the statement assuredly cannot be gainsaid.

Moreover, if emphasis be placed on the substance of literature rather than its form, if we are recalled again to the view that " art for art's sake " is a hollow mockery unless we remember that art covers the whole of life and can be satisfied with no delineations save the highest and the noblest, the statement again must be received as useful amid the controversies of the day. Emancipation from the fetters of all artistic procedure, from the necessary modes of creative faculty, the new writer will probably learn to be as undesirable as the old, and the choice of unworn subjects belongs forever to every writer wherever his eyes first respond to the sunrise. Moreover, now that we know and believe that mankind is one, that the movement toward self-expression has run a single and organic course through all the ages, that it is misleading to talk of Greek Literature or Chinese Literature or English Literature, and there is but the One Literature, to which all times and peoples have contributed, the talk about a new creative epoch in the United States seems rather superfluous and sounds rather hollow. The business of the writer of today primarily is to be above such limitations, to be widely learned, large-viewed, and catholic in sympathy and expression. We shall indeed be truly individual, truly original, truly the new and vital exponents of the best, if we comprehend more deeply and fully that universal thought and give it the utterance which is but itself in a different form. I am persuaded that all this enthusiasm for a New School can have no lesser significance than this, and we may hope that the great examples of Emerson and Hawthorne and Lowell and Whitman will not be lost upon us.

No doubt, the next ten years will see the production of a great many books, and the rise of many new names. Most of these books will have their little day and then pass peacefully to the limbo prepared for them. It is altogether too early to make predictions about the next movement, if the term movement be at all applicable to that persistent and deepening form of self-reflection which we call literature. However, we can safely affirm that if it be anything worth while, it will hold up life in the light which comes from the truest and completest study of all that has been. It will look at life at first hand; assuredly it will be satisfied with nothing short of that accuracy and fullness, that subtlety and depth, that indefatigable thoroughness, which mark the best scientific and philosophic effort of the time. *Thorough* it will be above all. Perhaps we can say that it will not be merely naturalistic; the hopes, the aspirations, the forecasts, the ideals of the race, the potencies which make the next age, and, even deeper yet, those potencies which make all ages, will be to it as real and as true as the last social pastime or the most recent vagary of the empty seeker after bizarre sensations. This thoroughness, however, it will attain by the same wide and profound knowledge, by the same breadth of culture, flowering and culminating in wisdom (for wisdom apart from culture is unthinkable), which have always been at the foundations of great writings. It will also make its high attempts in all the fields which the author cultivates, and the poet and novelist must take their place side by side with their co-laborers and compeers, the statesmen, the historians, the philosophers, the scientists. Universities will be to it centers of light and co-operation, the rarest and best critics that it can find, the justest and most helpful guides and probably will house some of

its most illustrious leaders and masters. Libraries do not necessarily make authors, but the great author has always been master of all the learning of his time, and the neophyte may take to heart the saying of George Eliot, that genius is only a life-long patience. Observation and experiment, uncorrected by the wit and wisdom of all observers and experimentalists, usually lead nowhither, and even when they produce great and permanent results do so with great difficulty and singularity that might just as well have been avoided.

To the writer of the Future, one, perhaps, may say: Learn to reverence duly and fully the art to whose practice you are willing to devote yourself. Try to learn adequately what literature really is both as a whole and in its specific manifestations. The study of your fellow man will only be possible to you when you have mastered the instrumentalities of that study and the achievements of your predecessors will furnish no small portion of your equipment. Remember that literature is more than any one of its separate departments and the writing of stories and the production of brief lyrics, however exquisitely finished, are only small segments of the full circle of letters, which accords place to elaborate treatises and profound endeavors. Be as novel and original as you please, but do not forget that the most novel of all things, and the most original and candid of all messages, will be to tell the highest and all pervasive truth. On the whole it will not hurt to be correct, and the more learning, genuine, deep, delicate, you can carry, the better for all concerned. Avoid the danger of mistaking the really commonplace glitter of colloquial wit and the sudden new growths of thought or speech, for the splendor that shines from work perfect to the finger tips. The more complete is your immersion in the deepest thought of

all mankind, the more fully you drink at those fountains of permanent speech and form, which the love and gratitude of all men have placed in unassailable glory forever, the more will your own labors partake of that which is above the reach of time's fingers, being really part of the infinite and the eternal. Care only for that which is highest and best, and the next creative cycle will be glad to number you as one of its chief producers and sustainers.

POETA LOQUITUR

WHEN Master William Shakespeare returned to his native village of Stratford after his successful career in the metropolis, he found, much to his pleasure, that the noise of his active life among the great of England had made small impression upon the quiet inhabitants of Warwickshire. Those who had known him in his youth welcomed him back to their homes and haunts, and easily made a place for the rich man, who seemed to have so much to give and asked for so little in return. After a few jests at the past, the recollection of some boyish indiscretions faded into the gray of the general intellectual atmosphere, and the stately poet took his place in the routine of the town with the respect and recognition of his fellow citizens. They found in him a half-humorous wisdom which they barely understood, and which nevertheless had an unmistakable fascination; they discovered also that he had no intention of holding himself aloof, but was quite willing to serve the small commonwealth in such ways as they might wish. He took part in the town-meetings, and the grammar school in which he had sat, and where he had deeply inscribed his name, called for his ready solicitude. Mistress Ann Shakespeare was a royal housewife, and the new dwelling was illumined on many occasions both for the young and old, since the Shakespeare children had inherited the easy vivacity and generous spirit of fellowship belonging to both father and mother. The neighboring gentry, who perhaps were more familiar with his career,

gladly saw him entering their doors, and the Lucys laughingly offered him their deer to be shot as might please him. So the haven was reached at length, and the world-comprehending man found the calm and peace which he had craved as the end of his strenuous exertions.

He had soon after his return contracted the habit of long walks beside the smooth-flowing Avon, and often paused beneath the shade of tall trees to watch its placid and even motion. He could rest there on the deepening grass, and, letting the book fall from his hand, permit his mind the wide range which had always been his delight and his custom. "Indeed, I may rejoice that I am out of it," so ran his thoughts away, "out of the noise and the turmoil and the rivalries. The mighty palaces and eager stress of many ambitions, battles, and furies and fiery hopes, fleet like the ripples on the passing river, and leave only latent reminders behind. Life is a dream, and I have happily reached the awakening; perchance that later sleep, dark and inevitable, which cannot now be far away, will also lead to higher and grander realities beyond. There goes the lark singing at heaven's gate, vanishing as she sings and singing as she vanishes, glad of the light and fearless in her ascent. I have much reason to be satisfied with the experiences which have been my portion. I remember my hot and impetuous youth, the scornfulness with which I threw off every restraint, the haste with which I drained the goblet of its many-flavored wines; and yet I was never a heedless squanderer of my precious heritage, and, if the hours were not given to the tasks set for me by others, they were filled with serious labors that had an inescapable allurement for me. If I learned small Latin and less Greek, yet the woodlands all around could

tell of the devotion to books and meditations which fulfilled the desires of an insatiable spirit, and taught me what no schoolmaster could have brought to my doors. They know not well by what strange ways understanding and learning and wisdom may come who deem that the religious solitude of cloisterers, and the voices of accredited teachers, are the only avenues to the wealth left by the seers and the seekers. I worked hard and earnestly, and the call to put into fit and fervid speech the thoughts and dreams which came to me in luminous crowds early took possession of me, and when I left my native fields I carried with me some writings which are as precious to me now as they were then. I found safety, too, from myself in the care and affection of a wife, who knew me for what I was, and sent me to make the achievements which lay in my hands.

" Those were great days; successes arrived with unlingering steps, and friends were soon trooping about me with eyes aglow and minds aflame. My courageous Southampton and glorious Pembroke, I have not failed to recompense with my best gold the companionship, which put into our youth, past all relapse or forgetfulness, a consecration to hopes that had in them no touch of failure or bitterness. You cleared the obstacles from my path, and it took no long time for me to tread it with the assurance that it was the right one.

" The actor's profession brought me no delight although, at the times when I attempted it, I found my efforts not ungrateful to my hearers. I was shown the plays in the coffers of the theater; they were a wild and fantastic assemblage. I could make but little of them, save as they offered me a group of incidents ready to my art. Then it was mine to

breathe the vigor of life into the persons, to bring unity and congruity into the action, and above all to make them the vehicles of ideals that I knew to be more insistent than the appeals of times and seasons with all their contents and pageants.

"The work went bravely on and the ardors of youth gave place to the serious meditations of middle manhood. Yet that playtime has surpassing memories; laughter and rebellion mingle with insight and discovery; the sense of mastery grew with its joy and completeness; if uprightness and justice walked with laggard feet, yet my barbs and arrows had no poison in their swift and pointed flight. Then I made acquaintance more deeply with that heaving and miraculous world, the mind and soul of man; the secret of history shone upon me with singular brilliance; the agonies and the ecstasies which make humanity's rightful plea for preëminence thrilled through me and found a voice in my saddest inventions; and later arose the comprehension that found a reconciling sphere wherein the conflicts passed away in a music which the old Pythagoreans heard in the blue Italian night descending from the serene stars. So we all joined in the great endeavor, rare Ben, burly Chapman, smooth Massinger, the noble twin laborers, the searcher of glooms, John Webster, Francis Bacon, renovator of the law and nature's secretary, and, last but not least, the great Queen, who visited us and sped the moments with her swift and bright intelligence. Nor did the dark-browed lady fail to lend her voice, and my wife did not deny her presence nor appreciation. We were unfailing friends in the upbuilding of a new world, which was to be an immaterial England, encircling the grosser one, placing her with the achievements

of Homer and Virgil and the wonders of Dante, bringing her on a par with the spirits of the drama that have made Athens forever memorable.

"How much do I owe them all! Perchance some might claim a chief part in my productions for this man or that, for the friends of the Mermaid Tavern, where we gave of our best, for the keen Lord Bacon, who has been so near and so dear to me. Nor should I gainsay his intellectual fatherhood of much that I have done. I remember one night when we walked home together from witnessing a grave imagination of the forerunner, Marlowe's, and I felt that I should undertake the same theme, and give to the money lender a strength and a height greater than those he shows in the grandiose play. The Philosopher discussed the varied aspects of the law, the narrow limitation within old precedents, and the freer interpretation from a higher point of view. My play stood out visible before me then, and I felt that I should call it his, but when it was fully wrought, I knew it bore my birthmark and was wholly mine.

"Such are my debts to all of them; but I could not endure the bondage of collaboration and found my chief results in the solitude of my closet. Thanks to all friends, but every man owes thanks especially to that elusive Genius who brings him gifts he knows not how nor when.

"I call up the shapes which appeared in me as spontaneously as the blossoms on the apple trees in the springtime; they have sped forth on all the winds and have found homes in the diverse considerations of men; I count them over and every head is dear; my harassed prince of the impetuous heart and the myriad doubts that gloomed and overshadowed his every hour; my victorious and long-suffering Hermione,

to whom the fates made restitution at the last; Imogen, Rosalind, Isabella, figures of light and strength; those of the darker destinies, my tormented Moor, courteous gentleman, too easily caught by lying lips, and him, greatest and most profoundly wounded, the misguided father and king, whose stormy wrath outstormed the elements; also, more mercurial, Beatrice, born under a laughing star, and her compeer, who threw her gibe for gibe; there are they all, more real than reality, and sure of life and breath as long as thought is thought and man is man.

"They say I have abandoned them and left them to sweep down the eddying currents of time with no care of mine. Nay, they are in good hands of mortal friends, and as well in the immortal care of all the generations yet to be.

"One further work I shall bring to a close; then I shall break my magic staff, surrender my mantel, and return from my voyages on the stranger seas. One further shipwreck remains to be described, one further island added to my many conquests. The great navigators have found a larger realm beyond the fierce ocean's bound, the revivified Atlantis of the chief philosopher, and there in days to come I shall be reborn grander than I have ever been. The next age may forget me and pass me by, but my resurrection is sure whenever man, seeking for knowledge of what he truly is, and penetrating to the mystery of his glassy essence, finds the reflection which I present not less than any truth yet revealed to the tireless search. For I have dealt with the primal and the imperishable foundations, those potencies which have always been, those questionings which have arisen everywhere, those answers which are given from age

to age, and which have deepened with the process of the suns.

"Thus my toil reaches its end; Ariel, my art and poesy, you shall be set free to work more wonders everywhere, and I, Prospero, return to my dwelling here. So shall run my newest play. What I have done shall become part of the general heritage, working out that destiny which shall bring justice to all men and make the word 'slave' impossible, even as a memory. This is my fame, to join with Chaucer, and Sidney, and Spenser and the everlasting names of all lands and periods in the bringing to pass of freedom and rectitude, equality of man, not militant, but coöperant and triumphant, wherever the race shall dwell, here or beyond the seas. Let them name me or not as they wish, my work endures. So I look towards the silence and the shadow which rounds our life, but, as I hearken and gaze, the silence becomes vocal with a music past all my dreams, and the shadow fills with a light beyond that of the sun, and I walk into the gloom and soundlessness with a step unfaltering and a heart unafraid."

NOTES ON THE NOVEL

THE history of the novel properly understood and written is the history of civilization. Literature, in a preëminent sense, embodies the intellectual aspirations and emotional experiences of a period; the rise and set of stars, as well as the movements of clouds across the spiritual firmament, are reflected in this most accurate of mirrors. To the investigator of science or the profounder speculator on the essential basis and framework of the world, there is much in this moving spectacle which we call the universe that is too trivial for his interest, too unimportant for his consideration. He seeks those wide-embracing ideas, which, seen in the extent of their application, and the potency of their transforming activity, must appear to him more real than the life-processes of the individual. But literature, like the sun which shines upon the just and unjust, or the rain of heaven that penetrates everywhere, finds nothing too low, nothing too mean, for the employment upon it of its idealizing tendencies. The magical sympathy of a Dickens enhaloes a vagabond and ne'er-do-well like Dick Swiveller, or a veritable outcast like the convict in *Great Expectations,* with a light that never shone on land or sea, and, disclosing possibilities of unsuspected goodness beneath the miserable exterior, turns detestation to pity and tears. Much that the pompous and bepowdered Muse of History disdains to weave into her majestic compositions, melodies too slight of texture for the symphonic magnitude of her effects, literature carefully and

lovingly cherishes, breathes into it the immortality which it is her prerogative to give, and makes us understand as nothing else can that the nations are of one blood, and the soul has no parentage lower than heaven. When we read in the *Greek Anthology,* we cease to be modern or classic, and are only human in those emotions of gladness or sorrow, over which, time and space, lords of so much, and masters so imperious, have not a finger's weight of authority. There are no heights of aspiration which the great novelists have not ascended, no depths of misery which they have not visited, and somehow made the darkness thereof burst into unexpected glow and illumination.

After all, the imagination is the genuine wand of Mercury, potent to convert disharmony into music, and uncomeliness into a semblance of beauty. We are apt to consider the realm of the imagination as an unreal world of shadows, more or less accurately reproducing the crass and stubborn verities of the sense-world, but the opinion seems susceptible of some just and negative criticism. The shadows which the imagination evokes have a singular persistence and freshness; Antigone, invoking the unwritten and eternal law of God in justification of her defiance of the law of man, Rosalind, playing at love with Orlando in the forest of Arden; Eugenie Grandet, unhappy victim of sordid passions and ignoble strivings, not her own, are as undying as human nature itself. The imagination is the meeting ground of all the forces that constitute man, the underlying activities, which fashion and control the sense-world, and which that world so mysteriously enwraps that science discloses them only after the combined effort of the ages, are marvelously divined by the imagination and reproduced, clothed in a

garment of light, which at least transcends Nature as a symbol easy to be understood. What ought to be is surely more real than what merely is; a thing is the totality of all its capacities rather than the two or three which it has realized; man, seen in the perspective of all his possibilities, is more really man than the blind and stumbling creature we meet everywhere failing to respond to the lofty demands of his destiny; the Art world is the world as it ought to be, not the world as it is. No so-called Realism can escape the necessity of this law; Zola is as much amenable to it unconsciously as Goethe is consciously. Imagination is the borderland between Reason and Sense, and on this borderland Genius stands singularly attuned to both spheres. Connected by mysterious avenues of influence with the universal, it yet thrills responsively to every appearance and change that fleets across the landscape of the visible and tangible; situated at the confluence of all streams of tendency that constitute humanity, its consciousness is permeated with the whole of life, and its expression is in consonance with that consciousness. No isolated individual is the great artist or poet or novelist; he is the living center of his time, the mouthpiece of the pervasive passion, the constant tremulous instrument that repeats every tone of the universal heart, every splendor of the universal perception, every throb of the universal woe.

From this point of view, the history of literature becomes a history of the successive stages or cycles in which mankind has attempted the realization of its indwelling potencies, and literary forms are not arbitrary molds fashioned by individual caprice for individual behoof, but essential modes of expression, profoundly allied to the thought of the times, and repeating that thought in outward guise and semblance

with a minuteness and accuracy the more surprising the more it is investigated. It is not an accident that Shakespeare arose in the glorious times of Elizabeth, or that George Eliot has written her profound and pathetic histories of the human conscience in the age of which we make a part, or that Nathaniel Hawthorne built his weird and crystalline romances amid the bleak and Puritan scenery of New England.

The question of literary form is just now the burning point of many controversies. The noise of the great conflict between the Classicists and Romanticists having smoldered into the ash of an issue overpast and overlived, there arises a new struggle between the advocates of form and the defenders of formlessness. We are all familiar with the Aristotelian dictum that every work of art must have a beginning, middle, and end, technical terms which I may be allowed to interpret into necessary foregoing conditions of the action, inevitable unfolding and process of the action, justified and assured consummation of the action, the three forming a unity of elements in which end returns into the beginning, being but the explicit expression of what lay implicit in the primal assumptions as the oak lies wrapped in the acorn or the rose in the delicate green sheath of the bud. Against the imposition of such restrictions the genius of some recent novelists revolts; art is to be as formless as the mere facts of the universe; from the infinite-leaved book of human nature the novelist or poet is to tear a page at will, and hand it over to his audience with all the marks of the rupture upon it. Theories of this nature are a significant symptom of the intellectual tendencies of our time. It is to be remarked here that in the attempt to free themselves from the presumed

shackles of form, these authors fall into the singular abyss of an adherence to the mechanical support of a purely external expedient to keep their scenes from falling asunder. Read a novel of this kind, and you find a mass of details, heaps of facts, only held together by the desperate (in an artistic sense) device that they are related remotely or proximately to the deeds of certain personages. So far from being formless, we have here the utmost subservience to form, in its crudest acceptation of mere juxtaposition in time and space, very different from form, which as the perfect utterance of thought responds with infinite flexibility to the changing complexion of the art product's significance, and is, therefore, no limitation of that significance but its marvelous representation and manifestation to minutest detail and particular.

The novel, the prose epic, takes up the life and thought of you and me, just as it is, narrates our daily trials and victories, penetrates into our heart of hearts, places its finger on the weakness that unmakes us, sees nothing too low for its idealizing touch, and brings into literature the great struggling mass of humanity, for their own sake, and with full appreciation that each dirty ruffian has unfathomed possibilities, and in the new Paradise discovers poverty-stricken little Nell and her grandfather, poor abandoned Nancy Sykes, degraded Miggles and the paralytic drunkard, who abused her, side by side with saintly Dinah Morris, and the noble Romola, before whose woman's instinct of the right even the great reformer quailed.

The novel presents an extraordinary duality. In the Classic Drama, the stately chorus accompanied the action with a continual impersonal comment; sometimes it expressed the

fear and awe of heart-stricken spectators at the anomalous calamities before them, sometimes it voiced a serene wisdom, which in Sophocles is that unifying understanding of the action, which means reconciliation and peace. The office of the chorus is performed in the novel by the novelist. He intends to leave nothing obscure or unexplained; his running commentary follows his characters whithersoever their destiny leads them. The complications which environ the actors is one thing; the interpreting accompaniment like a Wagnerian orchestra is another thing. In George Eliot the interpretation concentrates all the wisdom and learning of her great life and experience. The movement of the story lags, but the substance of the book is transformed to the pure gold of mature comprehension. Probably in her books the comment is excessive, and more recent fiction endeavors more and more to efface the novelist in the story. But the author inevitably reveals himself in his dénouement; from this there is no escape.

The novel admits of the development of its characters with a minuteness not attempted hitherto. In the Consuelo of George Sand we behold the transformation of the light-hearted Italian singer into the noble woman, who offers her art on the altar of her devotion to humanity, by slow stages which poetry had seldom essayed. In the Shakespearean drama, it is true, the same gradual unfoldment of characters is noticeable. The King Leontes of Act First of *A Winter's Tale* is separated by the whole diameter of being from the King who, repentant and reborn, is worthy to receive anew his wife and child; in *Shylock,* the intensity of passion and revenge is marvelous from first to last; repeated insult, the flight of an undutiful daughter, the opportunity given by

the losses of Antonio, add fuel upon fuel to a flame that had no demon malice in it at first. What Shakespeare incomparably inaugurated, the novelists have bettered by his instruction. The gradual declension of Tito Melema, that luxurious pleasure-loving nature, destitute of strength to resist its clamorous need of beauty and charm, is depicted with a truthfulness and fascination that border on the terrible. In *Wilhelm Meister,* with that singular power of combining the general and special, which belongs to all art, and of which Goethe is the consummate possessor, the generic stages of the growth of human character is the avowed subject of the delineation. The intentions of Goethe seem too large even for his majestic fulfillment; *Wilhelm Meister* and *Faust* are both, as he himself says, "something incommensurable."

The age of introspection, of analysis of motives, of dissection of mental idiosyncrasies, of spiritual chemistry, potent to dissolve into their primitive elements even the most elusive mixtures of emotions and transient fantasies, is upon us, and we are held by its strange fascinations. Plot and incident, surprise and love episode, yield in interest to subtle analysis of moods and convictions, that occasion tragedies, none the less pathetic because the reverse of uncommon. Poor Don Ippolito in a *Foregone Conclusion* divided between a love which he has not strength to seize, and a monotony of daily life which he has not strength to abandon, can only yield up his feeble soul to the potencies which sent it forth into the unequal conflict. No mystery of the complex consciousness of the nineteenth century can turn lock and key on the prying imagination of the novelist; like the air of heaven he penetrates everywhere, and to his eternal credit be it said, he

comes with rare exceptions in a spirit of gentleness and reverence, and defiles not even with a breath the object of his scrutiny.

The novel has been used as the vehicle of reform, and the organ of various humanitarian projects. But such purposes are always beside the genuine intent of a work of art, which like all beauty is its own excuse for being, and is not helped by external adventitious circumstances. *Little Dorrit* is not the most successful of Dickens' stories; and the *Circumlocution Office* and *Debtors' Laws* with all their iniquities are not worth one chapter in which Mrs. Flintwich dreams again. Reade's beautiful story of *Very Hard Cash* would be just as interesting without the diatribes against private insane asylums; and George Eliot has added as little to her reputation by her persistent handling of the question of marriage as influencing balefully the fate of man and woman, as George Sand by her socialistic monologues. The greatest works of the greatest novelists are pure works of art, and stand firm based upon their merits as such. The conflicts inherent in unsatisfactory social arrangements afford manifold material for the artist, and the conscientious portrayal of the unwholesome moral conditions and consequent misery therefrom resulting is a more powerful agency to displace or remold them than superficial excursions into a region only adequately known to specialists, and in whose byways and quagmires the unaccustomed traveler is likely to meet only with disaster and confusion.

The underlying thought of the novel is expiation and reconciliation. The great ages of tragedy are behind us; the horror of the unsolved complications of the past wears a slightly comic aspect to us. The problem of Sophocles, the

hereditary transmutation of evil, and the growth of crime from crime, resulting in a veritable tropical forest of moral abnormalities, is calmly solved by Hawthorne in the *House of Seven Gables*. The antagonism of freedom and authority, which seemed a hopeless tangle to our forefathers, receives majestic treatment and wisest solution in *John Inglesant,* most obedient of Jesuits and freest of souls. *Through Darkness to Light* the German Spielhagen leads his Problematical Characters, however unsatisfactory may be the end which the arch pessimist reaches. If the protestant spirit of our era has dropped from its theological scheme the Purgatorio, the novel, as if in compensation, has taken it up, and made it the brain and nerve of her realized body. The great novelists propound no conditions which they do not mold into harmony of some sort. Expiation, repentance, victory, is the benign and hopeful significance of the humanitarian art of our day. We smile at the comical outcome of a *Chance Acquaintance,* and imagine the western maiden might have found a place in the sacred refinement of the Arbuton family with little difficulty. When Dante called his epic the *Divine Comedy,* the classical period passed away forever; the world was no longer a tragedy, but a play with a happy termination in heaven.

With Richardson and Fielding the English novel leaped into the lists panoplied to conquer. They are first in the field and among the greatest masters. But character in their books appears too much an isolated development, if the term development is at all applicable; men and women are indeed taken as they are found, but they are assumed to be so, a rigid and fixed product, and life moves around them as something external and unassimilated. Eventuality is one phase

of life history; character is another; their interplay is essentially something arbitrary and each is subject mainly to its own modes of growth and unfoldment. With Walter Scott the dry bones of history begin to live and move and have a being; men and women have always had beating hearts and teeming intellects; Ivanhoe, and Louis the Eleventh, and Robert of Paris, loved and schemed and toiled as we do nowadays; the return to reality poured itself over the past, and all history became one in the life-giving medium of the imagination. With Dickens the humanitarian tendencies of the age found grotesque and humorous expression; he saw the soul of good in things evil; he laughed men out of their foolishness with an exaggeration of humor that knew no shadow of bitterness; he could send little Emily to Australia there to be redeemed into calm and simple womanhood, and make us understand that a seed of goodness, though covered with the rocky soil of hereditary evil and accumulated vice, if only given a chance, will bear something like its natural blossoms at last. In Thackeray the satirical vein is only a thin disguise for similar manifestations; if he sees only maimed products everywhere, it is because he longs so deeply for the perfect and true; if Clive Newcome's life seems a sad failure, he yet longs for a fairyland in which it will be otherwise.

But the novel reaches its culmination of achievement in certain great writers, who, each after the manner of his nation and time, grapples with the worlds of nature and man, and reflects them with the individuality of genius in his productions. George Eliot with genuine Saxon gravity has set herself in the mid of the moral whirlpool, and noted every eddy and upheaval there. With her, life and character

are constant growths, mutually unfolding, and at every instant impressing and impressed. Here is no violation of person or scene; the latter varies with the growth of the former; the resultant tragedy is the concurring effect of circumstance and character. The evolution of moral personality is her pregnant theme, and the world has no profounder insight or graver exposition, intensified by the gloomy background of an agnosticism against which her message glows in letters of fire. In Germany, Berthold Auerbach, in France, Balzac — the one with that richness of sentiment and idealistic tendency so characteristic of his nation, the other with unfailing Gallic acquaintance with social conditions and a marvelous introduction into his scheme of unregarded facts, potent for good or ill — in Russia, Tolstoi, of whom no characterization is here needed, have carried the novel as I think to the limits of its possibilities and left it a hopeless task to those who come after them to add to what they have done. To these belongs Nathaniel Hawthorne, most consummate artist in the pure romance, whom men have yet hailed as benefactor and friend. Here also is to be named Victor Hugo. In him the problems of the time find expression, and to greater or less extent solution.

The novel, it seems to me, is repeating the history of the other arts. With the growing tendency to an accumulation of unimportant details and the consequent formlessness, with the confinement of the individual novelist to special fields, with the singular technical finish and lack of genuine significance, with the waste of the novelist's powers on collisions relatively superficial and unimportant, the art appears on the verge of a new departure. One great epoch of the novelist is over. As we nowadays have little drama to speak

of, and are obliged to revert to the great times of Elizabeth, so we shall revert to the nineteenth century as the period when the novel extraordinarily flourished. We are on the eve of a new development of the novel or of the birth of a new literary art. All the signs of the times seem to point to this conclusion.

It is useless to forecast the future; but the new consciousness will find new and suitable expression. The art of to-day is eclectic; it unites all styles and ages in an attempt at unity; the art to come — it is reasonable to suppose — will continue so to do. Can poetry and prose combine in one consummate art product as recitative and melody, orchestra and song, in the new music? Can narrative and drama combine? Shakespeare mingled the first two, but their union must be deeper and more vital than his; George Eliot in *The Spanish Gypsy,* Browning in *The Ring and the Book,* attempted the mixture of the last two — with what success let critics decide. Recitative, the prose of music, melody, the poetry of music, song, the dramatic movement of music, orchestra, the continuous comment and interpretation, have been successfully united in the works of Berlioz, Wagner, and the rest. Shall literary art attempt the same issues? The next fifty years will answer.

THE TECHNIQUE OF THE DRAMA

THERE are a good many writers who have tried to make clear the procedures through which the dramatist goes in producing a successful work in his particular sphere of art. Aristotle has left a fragment which has made a great noise in the world, has had a host of imitators and has been subjected to all sorts of variant interpretations. The art of poetry has called into activity the versifiers, and thus has herself given expression to what she does when she produces a satisfactory poem or play. Dion Boucicault, following Aristotle too closely for an originator, and too loosely for a translator, has admitted us into the consciousness of the playwright, who has won the attention of the public. Gustav Freytag has done a similar task, but from a much larger outlook, and with true German thoroughness and conscientiousness. Hegel in his *Æsthetics* has presented a view of the drama which it might yet be to the best interests of the art to consider and follow. Denton J. Snider, in his *Commentaries on Shakespeare's Dramas,* has made an analysis of the dramatist's methods which is as complete as the most complex of dramas.

This article, however, is not intended to be a *catalogue raisonné,* but hopes to furnish some idea of what a technique of the drama may be, and what good and indeed essential use may be made of it.

In the first place it may be said that the drama is not to be disassociated from life; the notion of art for art's sake

has perhaps less application to the drama than to any other form of art; the drama is in immediate touch and relation with the general consciousness; it makes its appeal to an audience who will give it very little consideration if it does not right then and there arouse their emotions and their intelligence; they will also forget it forthwith if it has not left behind it some vital and definite impression, some outlook into fields of thought not previously visited, some clearing up of questions hitherto obscure and vaguely disturbing, some new presentation of experiences widely distributed and urgently soliciting deeper comprehension. The drama is not purely an amusement to be easily and superficially explained by the construction of a theater, the prejudices of a crowd, the caprices of an actress, the cupidity of a manager. The theater did not make the drama; just the reverse is true; the drama made the theater, and the drama was an urgent need of mankind for self-expression before a circle of seats was created, or a marble stage fronted the afternoon sun. There may be poems all verbal felicities and softly evanescent music (I have grave doubts about it), there may be paintings all color and shadow and composition (I never saw any such which seemed to be of the first order), there may be music all rhythm and sensuous tone and dreamy inconsequence (the composers talk about their works with a wholly different phraseology), but the drama of the theater is bound to be a structure, is necessitated to tell a story and lead to a conclusion, is not harmed by bringing to light connotations of all shades and depths.

The drama thus becomes one of the chief instrumentalities in the development of the race, and it cannot be understood except as part of the consentaneous forces building up

the civilization that is always higher and more inclusive than the one which is at present occupying the spatial and temporal expanse. The drama is part of the larger drama which is being played by the great historic protagonists, nation with nation, society with society. There in little we behold the large destiny, freedom, culmination. The struggle depicted, and the victory attained, is more than an individual struggle or victory, it is racial, it is humanitarian, it is universal. The dramatist is the mouthpiece of ideas that pervade the audience whom he addresses as well as himself, if he shall reach their coöperant activities, and he falls below his privilege if he cannot do this. He must express in his transparent medium what they have been thinking, he must clarify what has been dark, he must harmonize what has been discordant, he must bring peace where there has been a sword. Even where he attains only the negative, there must glow somewhere a light of reconciliation, there must appear somehow the serenity of which we are in search. The methods which he uses must be those which life uses, the technique which seizes him with infallible certainty must be alive, the very activities which have constituted his neighbor, himself, kingdoms and principalities, must reappear in what he aims at and in what he accomplishes.

> "Nature is made better by no mean,
> But nature makes that mean."

The work of the dramatist is therefore in no sense individual; it is distinctly and essentially social; it matters not how unimportant or superficial it may be; it is and remains a social effort of its kind and degree. There is much more at work in the dramatist than his own unassisted powers;

this is another effort of the social spirit to come to consciousness of itself, and make such expression of itself as to bring clearness on the subject to all in place of barren obscurity. There is a great inclination on the part of criticism at the present time to call for the peculiar note, to insist upon differentiation of understanding, to accept the ancient platitudes provided they have a novel phrase and accent. A cursory analysis will show that the novel phrase and accent resolve themselves into thin air unless they are part and parcel of the genuine life and progress of the community into relationship with which they are placed. The bizarre and unusual is literally the nothing at all, and belongs to those stages of the development of individuality which failed to see that the real individual is a plenum, whose contents are the thoughts and aspirations of the *milieu* in which he dwells. The dramatist therefore who is new and awakening and alluring is the one who expresses the new synthesis, the new comprehension, the new advance which his fellows are making; he is the community focused and incarnate; he announces the new stars just arisen out of the infinite fullness around us; he delights us because he makes us a new revelation of ourselves.

Such is the genuine meaning of the individual note, the essential idiosyncrasy of the risen artist; not an empty specialty of his, which considered in its abstraction would be wholly unintelligible to the rest of mankind, but the apprehension illuminating his consciousness which belongs to all and which it is given him as a supreme privilege to utter and clothe in immortal words. This is his genius, a possession of him by a brighter and a larger potency, a guidance which he must follow religiously or the flambeau will pass to other

and worthier hands. It is a new birth in him of vision universal, of profound understanding, of general service. The dramatist lies under this law overtly and expressly, he is not so much to be read as to be seen, he ought to be an open air artist, and it is questionable if we have made an improvement by giving dramas at night, in an artificial light, after the completion of a hard day's work, an amusement for jaded susceptibilities, craving abnormal stimulus and excitement. Wagner seems to have been on the right track when he went back to the old festival idea, a time when life made a holiday, and gave itself up to a serious and joyous expression of itself, what its pleasures held in their singular conformation, what its agonies fostered in their mysterious foreshadowings. The great action compressed into typical representation, the simplicity of scenery giving typical and suggestive environment, the sonorous delivery and prophetic language and meaning, perhaps, are as high and noble as our realistic extravagance, our utterance subtilized into inanity, our febrile excitations playing upon nerves too wearied for healthful and athletic response.

Such work of the dramatist cannot be without order and method; there may be at first no distinction between form and content, but the upbuilding of the material, the consummation of the high and moving product, must proceed according to its own laws, and is not to be regarded as the result of mere fortuity. There is unquestionably a technique underlying the whole achievement, however unconscious or purposely oblivious of this technique the artist may be. No doubt the drama was originally effected without any knowledge of this technique, undoubtedly the substance or content of the play originally molded the form into a

suitable investiture, showing itself in every line and turn and charm, but with habituation and repeated success, with the use of the same material by different creators, the method, the procedure could be contradistinguished from the content, the technique would arise into consciousness, and with the artist's innate capriciousness would of itself furnish a convenient matter to play with and to experiment with. The technique would not be a dead mass of formalities, a vast vacuity into which one might pour any molten mass whatsoever, giving it thereby a common and stereotyped appearance, but a controlling norm, a presiding and developing orderliness, which would convert the crude freedom of creation into appreciable contour and beauty. The technique is not a dead concatenation of rules and formularies, but an organic wholeness of activity, combining within itself an increasing subtlety and complexity of procedures, the regulative principles, which are energies of freedom and in obedience to which the artist freely labors and elaborates.

It is not to be supposed that the drama sprang from the head of the time like Pallas Athene from the head of Zeus. Slowly and with difficulty did the achievement come. Out of tribal observances, choric genuflections, crude responsive singing, festivals, religious and secular, by slow degrees the last and most embracing form of poetry wound its spiral way. It was a strange and unusual mixture, narrative, lyric, dialogue. Gradually everywhere the clearer product supervened, taking material from its immediate environment, and stripping off formal excrescences and emerging finally in genuine and especial completion. The epic remainders fell from it, the lyric additions disappeared, the living interaction of men and women in strenuous collision survived as

its bodily investiture. Everywhere the consciousness of the endeavor arose into clearness, and some understanding of technique was the inevitable result. Everywhere we find more or less complete statements of this technique. Wherever the drama flourished, there flourished also a more or less adequate apprehension of method and intention. The artist everywhere grew into understanding of his toil, and if he by his native endowment and established tendency was averse to systematic elucidation, he put all sorts of inspired expressions into the mouths of his characters, showing that he had thought upon technique, worked it out with some satisfaction and did not go on in a blind ecstasy "with eyes in a fine frenzy rolling and give to airy nothings a local habitation and a name," but labored knowingly, and attained results premeditated and climacteric. The critic of the right kind should furnish the full science for him.

The appreciator or critic gave vent originally to his subjective likes and dislikes. This pleased him and so was good, this displeased him and so was bad. Critics, however, are of all sorts of make-ups; they come with prejudices and prepossessions; they have all sorts of antecedents and the work must pass through "a sea change into something rich and strange" to give them satisfaction; it is quite transformed through their manipulations, and the rose is not always the rose when they are through with it; nevertheless even in the merest subjective criticism, reasons and regulations become apparent which can be used as guides and assistants in the making of a judgment. If the criticism is negative, there is even more likelihood of unveiling the structure which underlies the work of art, in this case the drama, and the principles on which a judgment is to be based and which con-

stitutes the artist's creative idea before he puts pen to paper are more and more revealed. It is not a great step to find that these principles have been present in all creative activity, and moreover that they are closely connected together and make a system of guidances, which now can be consciously and premeditatively used as they have obscurely and indifferently been used all the time. The technique is not imposed from without, it is the clearly perceived and directive method, which at every step makes the work right, colors the scene just as it should be, subordinates the characters to the effects intended, makes the speeches exact and inevitable emanations from the soul of the drama.

The work of the dramatist is a free work of creation. The difference between the artist and the craftsman lies in this very freedom. The craftsman is bound to his task by utilitarianisms of various kinds, the craftsman in the drama labors on parts intended to exploit the peculiarities of an actress, he produces parts suited to her as a dressmaker produces clothes to fit her exactly and ornately, but the real dramatist creates freely, his object is the expression of his idea, the bringing into visibility — which is beauty — of that which he has within, his conception put on the stage in the form of scene and dialogue and characterization. He demands above all the freedom which he feels to be the very especial atmosphere in which he can bring his labors to a successful fruition. This freedom, however, while it is the appanage above all others which he demands, is far from being just given to him whole and adequate. On the contrary, he must make a conquest of it, through experimentation and failure must acquire a knowledge of it, his very successes trouble him with defects that detract from the per-

fection he seeks, he must acquire the method and procedure of his freedom; in other words he must learn its technique, and habituate himself to the serene and complete exercise of this last; he discovers that the essential form of his freedom is this technique, nothing external, but the nerve and impulse of freedom itself. Without a conscious acquaintance of this he is incapable of accurate judgment; he is subject to as many caprices of the changing winds as a bubble iridescent in the sunshine; he never has poise and command of himself. Technique may therefore be explained as the dramatist's freedom freely making itself master of that freedom.

Now the setting down of that freedom in a systematic exposition is of course an inevitable effort of the human spirit. If it has not yet been entirely achieved, that assuredly does not mean that it never will be achieved; just the reverse is true; the effort will continue to be made until something adequate has been done. Nor does this imply that the last word has been said; nor that the adequate statement has not already appeared; but with every development of the drama, with every advance, with every higher and more complex realization, additional freedom of technique will come into view, and the activity of the playwright will become fuller, stronger, more conscious of itself, more habituated to its freedom, and more joyous in the exercise of it. He will become more effectually a citizen of the dramatic realm, conversant with its laws and constitution, more aware of its tasks and responsibilties, more at home in its every region and pleasure, more expressive of its significance and spirit. He will see that his own drama is only part of the drama as a whole, that there is no such thing as the technique of

a drama, but assuredly a technique of *the* drama, whose mastery is as necessary as the mastery of the language which he speaks — its grammar — as the mastery of the thought which he thinks — its logic — and that he like every other artist must work in a sad serenity from which he cannot free himself, which gives himself to himself, consciously and freely, and which makes him technically and knowingly the mouthpiece of ideas and the fashioner of beauty which mankind has always regarded as the permanent and universal center of the ever variant like of the hours and days and centuries.

FOUR PLAYS OF HENRI BERNSTEIN

QUITE recently in the pursuance of other occupations I found myself obliged to read four plays of the famous Parisian Dramatist. Mr. Bernstein is a master of the stage as it is at present constituted. Adept in the art of making fine pictures behind the footlights, his characters talk a language which is clear and presumably elegant. They have elaborate and highly conventionalized manners; they all belong to the upper so-called strata of society; they do not eschew a certain familiarity with slang, strictly within well defined limits; they move about amidst interiors of extraordinary splendor; to the spectator unused to such grandeur they disclose the daily life and habits of princes and dukes and millionaires. The personages have no scruples whatever in the attainment of the objects of their desires; they are quite up to lying, cheating, and disloyalties of many kinds; they seem to owe no allegiance to any organized activities, church or state or business or charity; they gossip cheerfully about each other and the amenities of host and guest seem to place small restraint upon their tongues or feelings; altogether the world is one where the individual caprice is paramount and allowed full swing in its exercise.

Mr. Bernstein understands well the art of the theater of to-day; the action is always developed with skill and swiftness, his various exciting elements are sufficiently analyzed and at the proper times brought into relief, the suspense is excellently kept up. The dénouement is not foreseen, and

the surprise of the close makes the necessary climax. The devices of the theater which have come to us out of the past are not neglected, and the artificial framework is there in all its glory; the usual opportunities are afforded for laughter and the tears flow at the proper intervals; the varying groupings, the unexpected entrances, the premeditated exits, the impending catastrophies delayed to the very last, the sudden illuminations and obscurities bringing distressful disclosures and complications, are all in continuous and skillful evidence; the end of the play is a purely external event in the lives of the actors, no matter how tragic it may appear, and they are at once ready for new occurrences of similar kinds. They remain untouched in their inner consciousness by all they have done or found. There is no life of intellectual growth anywhere in any of them. This world makes nothing of its earthquakes or upheavals, it goes on as before in complete forgetfulness, and the maladroit discovery of to-day is wholly obliterated to-morrow.

It can hardly be said that these are living characters, and it is difficult to believe that the plays can have any real permanence. They are distinctly of the fashion of to-day and the next generation will have its own plays occupying this same domain.

The artificiality of the whole output constantly strikes the reader. It seems as if a framework had been devised for a play, so many scenes succeeding each other in such and such order, arrangements for such and such actors, such explosions of rage and empty despair at these points, such alternations of light and shade, such dénouements skillfully brought out at the last fall of the curtain.

Of course they present only a limited study of life. The

circle within which they move is that of the fashionable area of Paris. The interests of that area are also not taken in their full extent. That world, no doubt, amuses itself in its own way; it no doubt considers the amusements to which its time is given as important in the highest degree; the spread of the democratic idea still appears to it only as the intrusion of the proletariat into precincts which are too sacred to admit of the entrance of the vulgar. If there are any among the upper circles who devote themselves to charities, or church affairs, or politics, or the arts, they do not appear here. Banking, commerce, gambling, horse racing, hunting, intrigue, love making of all sorts, appear to be the occupations of the persons who cross this stage. They can hardly be called persons who have made much of their opportunities, they know all that they know only superficially, and they are troubled with as few scruples as they care to carry. A great business talent figures here and there, but he has apparently concluded to keep business in the background, and brings it into play only as it may serve other and more social purposes.

The remarkable intelligence of the author, however, is seen at every point. We have spoken of his complete knowledge of the stage, of his construction of the plays to make interesting spectacles for the public, and to keep the attention of his audience on the alert. It seems also that the intention of the author is to give as little real character to his personages as he can without making the nullity complete. He has apparently with purpose brought together a number of wholly commonplace men and women, who pass through adventures that bring them into the limelight, which only at times is objectionable to them. In only one or two instances does he show any indication that he cares for these men or

women at all, or that he has any feeling whatsoever about the fate that overtakes them.

There are sufficient indications that these plays both as to characters and incidents are studies from actual occurrences. These masters of finance probably have figured in the salons and bourses and newspapers of Paris. These catastrophies are events which have aroused the attention of the Parisians. These scandals no doubt have been repeated in the clubs of Paris. Altogether we have a well-considered picture of life in the so-called higher circles of the city which calls itself the center of modern civilization. If the object of art is to hold the mirror up to nature, it must be said that this has assuredly been accomplished in these products of the Parisian dramatic muse.

The four plays under consideration are *The Thief* (Le Voleur), *The Storm* (La Rafale), *Samson,* and *Jou-Jou. The Thief* is the least important of the four. The picture of life in the country in *The Thief* has its charm; the trifling liaison between the wife of the visitor, and the eighteen-year-old son of the host, introduces the serpent into that Eden; the carelessness of the hostess in leaving money in an easily accessible drawer is characteristic, as is her husband's indifference to possible extravagances (he distinctly says that he is glad that he is rich enough to allow his wife to throw money out of the windows if she chooses); the discovery of unexplained losses, the detective in the house who as usual displays his complete ineptitude, the marvelous interview in the bed chamber of the visitors, after retirement for the night, where the husband wrings the confession of the theft from the wife, the attempted self-sacrifice of the youth in the futile effort to save the woman with whom he supposes that he is in love,

constitute the scenes that move through three acts. When we are done with them we are left with the impression that a week-end in the country under such circumstances is a pleasure that we are able to forego with complete equanimity.

The one of these plays which arouses the most interest is unquestionably *The Storm*. Here appear the characters who have the most strength, and in whose fate our sympathies can be really enlisted. Here is found the one woman who calls for the pity and awe that make real tragedy. The story of *The Storm* is simple enough. The scene is laid in the family of a multi-millionaire who has risen from bourgeois antecedents into control of the commercial world, and whose family have penetrated into the aristocracy. The mother and father have characteristics that make of them real beings in the gallery of shadows with which this dramatist ordinarily deals. The daughter has been gently forced into a marriage of convenience to further her father's ambition — she is the woman who illumines the realm of these occurrences. She possesses strength of will, intelligence, charm, a woman born to command. She has, however, been swept off her feet in this maelstrom of destructive potencies. She has fallen under the fascination of the least worthy of these men who fawn about her father in the expectation of retrieving lost fortunes. He is a reckless gambler, manager of a racing combination belonging to others, he has lost a large portion of the winnings not his own in a night of reckless play, and he is confronted with ruin, personal and social. Helene, who has submitted to his passions, throws herself into a herculean effort to save him. In this conflict her secret comes to light, her devoted father is thrust into the dilemma of a refusal to help her or abetting her in her disloyalty to her husband,

her mother in her nobility is in despair. Helene rises to heights of determination inconceivable in such a situation. The lover makes up his mind, such as he has, that suicide is the only outlet. There is a bizarre interview between him and the father; the latter repudiates the proposition of suicide; the aristocrat tells him that this is bourgeois philosophy, a parvenu like the father might think so, but for him, descendant of generals, and kings and cardinals, the only course is self-slaughter. The possible rejoinder as to the vulgar origin of all aristocracies does not appear to either disputant.

In another scene the father offers to send the lover on a business mission into the remote parts of Asia. He will have little work — this is to be done by a corps of assistants — he is to receive a liberal salary, his debts attented to, and after sufficient time has elapsed — it need not take long — to bring forgetfulness of his present difficulties, he will return, resume his present prominence in society, and in due time — some kind of a divorce can be managed — lead Helene to the altar. Strange to say, the lover rejects this eminently reasonable and congenial proposal.

At the moment when Helene arrives at her lover's apartment, her task accomplished after incredible efforts and the sacrifice of her former stainless repute, she finds the door of his private room locked, she hears the sound of a shot, and she beats with her powerless fists on the barrier, and another phase of aristocratic life, with its pomp, its circumstance, its vulgar rewards, its scandals, its empty honors, its cynical disregard of obligations, has passed in review before us. The woman pays the cost, she has sacrificed the one nobility that yet counts in this sordid complication of meaningless activi-

ties, and the wife endures the inevitable ordeal as best she may.

Samson is in many ways the repetition of the collisions found in *The Storm*. This time, however, we have a hero, not a heroine, and he with masculine strength and ferocity like his namesake pulls down to ruin the Philistines who vainly attempted to hold him in bondage. The play teems with revelations of the practices and consciousness of the *haut ton*. It is an outpouring of accumulated scandals of a society caring for nothing but the gratification of the momentary inclination. The last of the four, *Jou-Jou,* is the least interesting, and deals with a subject which we do not care to name, but is the so-called triangle in the very extreme of its remarkable energies.

We ask ourselves the meaning of all these efforts, dramatic and fatalistic. It is clear enough, judging from his portrait, that Mr. Bernstein is a man capable of more than an interest in a mere external success of the theater. There is no special element of humor in the plays, with the possible exception of Max, the degenerate son in *Samson;* there is no apparent effort at caricature. All the characters seem to take themselves seriously and seem to believe that the life they are leading is the only life worth while. They are entirely convinced that to do anything useful is altogether beneath them. The men who are out in the world making the money which they squander are not wholly up to the standard. The multimillionaire father of Helene has difficulties in getting himself elected to a club. So Mr. Bernstein seems to take them as they take themselves. *Samson* has in it perhaps some element of humor which the others lack. The mother with her memories of past conquest, the reckless daughter, re-

morselessly sacrificed by her heartless lover, the stupidly stately father, the monkey of a son, as his mother calls him, form a family group not easily matched for ignominious contempt anywhere. The word which in the preceding pages has been translated Storm, means Squall — after all these agonies are only a tempest in a teapot. Such personages and incidents have nothing tragic about them. The author seems to be laughing in his sleeve at the people in *The Thief*. The exaggerated dialogue in *Jou-Jou* amazingly fits the squalid incidents, and the assumed grandeur and dignity of the gentleman who offers marriage to Jou-Jou strikes the keynote of the piece. We are in the presence of a satirist who presents his picture with a calm realism that is more condemnatory than all objurgations that a formal arraignment could bring. Look at these men and women; listen to their talk intimate and otherwise; hear what Grace Ritherford has to tell in *Samson;* see what their actions are, and how they move and have their being; if the author could not give them brains nor honor nor rectitude, it is probably because they had none of these. Here is a full-length portrait by an artist of the modern school, portraits by a dramatic Sargent, who shows through the visible contour and the exterior fashion the seething chaos within. The satire is there; take away earnest endeavor of every kind and what is left to men and women? Behold the picture; what do you think of it? Mr. Bernstein lifts the veil; he makes no comment; the picture is its own story and its own comment. To the men and women of so-called society he says, here is your full-length portrait, it is well studied and complete, what do you think of it? How do you like it?

THE LEARNED PROFESSIONS

IN the Middle Ages the scholar appears in a process of individualization. Indeed the establishment of differences seems the great work of that extraordinary section of human history. The baron not only encased himself in armor, nowadays too small to be worn by his descendants, but furthermore built around himself wall and moat and tower to insure his isolation amid the encircling forests and rivers. The feudal system made prominent a series of gradations, each one relatively independent within its own sphere, and yielding only a sullen and uneasy allegiance to the coveted potency above. The Church, moreover, emphasized individuality; within the sanctuary, in the presence of eternity, the artificial distinctions of this earth vanished, and the man as such stood alone amid the uplift and ordeal of the confessional. The universities also differentiated themselves; if one wanted to study law he frequented Bologna or Padua; for medicine one attended lectures at Salerno; for theology one found it well to hear the words of the adept at Paris.

Dante in his *Convito* gives a sublimated account of the studies pursued at the seats of learning. The arrangement of studies corresponds measurably with the hierarchy of the heavens in his *Paradiso*. Each branch was under the guidance of a supermundane conclave ranging from Angels and Archangels through Dominions and Principalities up to the Supreme. The Sun, the Moon, the Planetary Bodies, the Starry and Crystalline Heavens, the Empyrean, exercised an

influence over the endeavor of the student. He was not an isolated atom in the vast of the universe, but he was subject to constant and beneficent influxes of power from realms the most remote. The leech with his astrology, the clerk with his jurisprudence resting on revelation, the mystic and theologian with his trances and inspirations, held exceptional places which obtained strength and firmness from the general ignorance, depending on them for light and ministration.

The learned professions went on to their complete differentiation. The priest was the depository of sacred mysteries accessible not to reason but to a faith whose operations were as occult as the subjects with which it dealt. The devotee fled to the deserts and mountains, went through incredible renunciations and torments to reduce the flesh to a minimum and leave the spirit the untrammeled exercise of its functions. He became a celibate, he gave up the world in its most alluring guises, he founded his establishment on the rock from which the fiercest waves flew back in foam-crested and inevitable defeat. He threw away every gift which the world might bring; from his vantage ground outside and above mankind he ruled mankind. The clerk went on to a similar aggrandizement. He became the companion and adjuster of difficulties for lords and kings. The settlement of disputes between members of the commonalty could be left to unimportant functionaries, whose procedures were governed by customs already established with respectable firmness. Law itself was a grandiose subject akin to the magisterial enunciations of the Church, and requiring the subtlest of intelligence for its mastery. The lawyer was rising into his own; the man for diplomatic emergencies, the establisher of kingdoms on the solid foundations of order and of

precedent, the custodian of a knowledge whose intricacies demanded a lifetime for its comprehension.

The leech or physician had a more difficult task before him. The subject of health was not one that made a definite or conspicuous appeal to the Middle Age. The macerations of the monk rested on the consideration that the body was the avenue whereby evil entered into communication with the spirit, and the reduction of this latter to its lowest terms was on the whole a consummation devoutly to be wished. The consciousness, however, on which the practice of the physicians rested was merely beginning. Much he could only study in secret, making himself thereby liable to dangerous misunderstanding; for greatly as the body might be condemned, its dissection savored of the sacrilegious. Nevertheless he too entered upon his inheritance; though his pharmacopea might be limited, his supply of occult usages, his opportunities of mystical incantations, were correspondingly enlarged. Indeed his special field of learning was so little open to general experience that his differentiation became even more marked than that of his compeers. So there arose three professions, whose members respectively were held together by strong class feeling and communal understanding, whose influence for weal or woe was singularly coercive, whose overshadowing of the social process might be serious.

The Middle Age was a time of guilds. The members of a trade united in an association which saw to it that the standard of achievement was kept up. They gave encouragement to do the best that was possible in their particular realms, they had exhibitions and competitions and a successful work was made the subject of comment and eulogy.

The learned professions were held together by strong and effective ties. The priesthood was a body of men living apart, wearing a peculiar and suggestive garb, and exercising a singular authority. The members of the legal profession in their official capacity assumed a dress different from their fellows, which was supposed to give dignity to the tasks which they were called on to perform. They also made a section of the community, more or less set apart, and they were not unwilling to accept the favor which the general astonishment was ready to award. So the physician could figure as a wonder-worker; he was acquainted with the secret things that underlie life itself; he belonged in the position of preëminence, which he was ready to take and maintain.

The professor in the university held a somewhat anomalous place; if he taught theology he was in all probability a celibate, and spoke with the assurance that the Church could give; if he was a purveyor of secular information he received the gratitude of his many students, but his after all was a life of seclusion; he was in a measure sequestered from the active world, and the recognition which came to him had in it elements of condescension and impatience. He was a learned man whose touch upon the actual might be ignored, and to whom after all needed to be given only a cursory consideration.

As for the poets and litterateurs, musicians and artists, they are indeed necessary to the elegancies of courts, but their labors belonged to the superfluities and easily removable excrescences. Their message had too little reality to serve for more than passing delights. The minstrel like the jester was to be ready when his special manner of amusing was

desired. The household had uses for an architect, and his plans were not to be despised when a chapel called for repairs.

The painters and sculptors might have shops of their own, might sell to such patronage as came to them, but they belonged in the entourage of the great nobleman, and were called upon for services when required. This could result in remarkable works of art, but it was less calculated to develop independence of character. They were hardly to be considered as belonging to a learned profession. Indeed learning was not regarded as an appanage of an artist. The notion has come down the ages and we still seem to think that the highest mental cultivation is not necessary when the artist is in question; indeed the less learned he is the better; he is to proceed on the mysterious ways of his creation with as few impediments as possible.

The poet and litterateur had a curiously hard time of it. How they ever managed to live through it seems an insoluble problem. We think of Dante, fierce and implacable, going from one harborage to another, treated with the misappreciation that is a sort of half-light in which poetry has made its processions, and finding peace at last only in the beneficence of the Church. We think of Shakespeare as a member of a band of players, and retiring finally to the obscurity of Stratford, where he could have a few last and unembittered years. Socially the playwright and the artist were on a level with strolling vagabonds, and even to-day the prejudice against literature persists. We look upon the successful painter or writer or novelist with a certain wonderment and curiosity, but he is after all not exactly the kind of man who is to be called on for the serious work of life.

The secularization which was brought to pass by the

Renaissance only accentuated the individualization and class conservation of which we have spoken. The introduction of the Arabian learning made the scientific efforts of the time more decisive, but it allowed the physician another chance to aggrandize his function, and to give added obscurity to the knowledge which he was bound to possess. So the restudy of Roman jurisprudence made the realm in which the lawyer moved more remote from the common understanding; the establishment of courts with costumes and punctilios introduced additional differences; the legal mind had a diverse law of development from that of the ordinary man. The solidarity of the church continues; and when the Reformation came, the introduction of a divine call supplied the place of the communal and monastic life.

Thus the three learned professions gained in strength and influence. It could not well be otherwise. They advanced in assertion of power and position, they developed a sufficient *esprit de corps*. The web of circumstance, personal ambition, the certainty of achieved success, the unquestioned and increasing significance of the labor performed by mankind, gave them more and more hold upon the community and its rulers. The feeling of their importance became one of the inheritances of men, and as such has descended to all of us.

The learned professions have taken upon themselves the performance of great works for their fellows. They have been the chosen vehicles of expression for the predominant sentiment of the time; they have been the orators who incited to action of all sorts; they have been members of all parties; they have been the confidants of rulers; they have themselves occupied the chief places in governments and diplomacies; the positions of authority have fallen to them. They

have dominated the educational systems of the world; indeed it is not so very long ago since the only education afforded in our higher institutions of learning was practically that which would lead to the efficiencies which they demanded, and the education required in the lower schools was largely preparatory to a work to which many of the younger students could under no reasonable anticipation have a right to aspire. This domination of the educational systems of the world has only been broken in more recent times. The struggle is by no means over. We are to-day obliged to buttress every advance in order to make it stand in the winds of controversy that beat upon it from the four quarters of the heavens. The modern theory of educational values and the adoption of educational groups in opposition to the exclusive claims of the classicists has had to battle for every foot of ground which it has gained.

As has been said in the earlier pages of this article, the Middle Age fostered every form of individualization. The individualistic note is to be found in the art, in the literature, in the government of the period. The artist looked upon the world from his own peculiar coign of vantage and produced his work accordingly. This may have been a great advantage in many ways, but it has within it the possibilities of serious consequences that the future has certainly developed without stint or mercy.

So the national spirit also concentrated itself, and the struggle of kingship with the lords terminated in the supremacy of the ruler. The European States began to assume something of the shapes which they pronouncedly took later on. The Romance peoples had their period of ascendancy. Spain made strides towards a world-empery; Portugal almost

circumnavigated the world; France was as she has always been, the center whence came learning and literature; Italy was a wonder country, the home of picture and statue and music. England had already entered upon her great work of elaborating those political devices which have enabled mankind to establish its freedom upon unshakable foundations. The Teuton, however — and England belongs in that predominant fold — is slower of development, and the modern world and its immediate successors seem to belong to him.

The individualistic system in the realm of society proceeds to its logical development. The meaning of this of course in its last analysis is the equating of the individual with the whole of society. The problem emerges of granting to every man all the rights to which he can lay claim and yet at the same time give stability to the community of which he is a member. The strong man or the over-man sweeps into the receptacle af his possessions the major share of the so-called goods of life. Quite recently he has made a philosophy of his inordinate demands, and has negatived finally and decisively any opposition that may arise against him. Whether he is called Zoroaster or Napoleon, when he speaks all men are supposed to listen, and everybody must recognize his superiority. As the number of supermen and superwomen knows no limit, a conflict is sure to arise, and its settlement will call into being all the art and wisdom of the race.

There ensues the tendency to put everything up for sale and barter. The establishment of individualism inevitably leads to this result. Everything begins to have its price. The learned professions are swept into the whirlpool with all other interests. The position of a dependent upon a lord or

king gave the former the opportunity of using the freedom which he had as listed him. A painter might cover the walls with frescoes; an architect build castles and fortifications; his leisure he could use for his own purposes; his art would have a chance to take unto itself wings, and his private work would arise solely from his own pleasure and his ideal of perfection. When his work is put up for sale, a different spirit enters on the scene. The learned professions have their wares also ticketed and labeled, and they too enter into the chatter and fever of the market place. The industrial millennium in whose light we are now basking rests upon developed individualization as its basis and support.

So the spheres in which national life realizes itself also grow individual and differenced. These may be generalized into three, the industrial, the political, the spiritual. The center of the political realm is justice, the development of the forms and devices which bring about peace among men in all their walks of life, which harmonizes their disagreements, which apportions to each man and nation his allotment, and which looks to a solidarity that establishes on a firm basis the aims and duties of men and women and commonwealths.

Then there is the realm in which humanity may most truly be said to live and move and have its being, the realm which is its own reason for existence, which has its beginning and center and termination in itself. This is the realm of the idealities for which all other realms are, and whose ends and purposes they serve. This is the region of the creative activities of men, of science and philosophy, the arts, the uplift of religion, and the recognition of the genuine leadership of man as God.

Then there is the industrial realm, which has thrust itself into prominence in modern times. Before that victorious banner the others have apparently faded into secondary consideration. There seems to be only one living art to-day. Science has become if not predominantly yet decidedly utilitarian, and philosophy occupies a tenement somewhere in the outskirts. What is the relation of these spheres? Are they capable of direct translation, the one into the other? Are the values respectively belonging to each governed by the same rules and interconnections? In the industrial realm everything has its price; is the same true of the others? It seems on closer inspection that the different spheres are not commensurable with each other, and the attempt to translate directly from one to the other cannot be executed without more or less violence in the process. The administration of justice is not expressible in industrial terms, and the masters of this latter domain look with considerable humor upon the effort to give the pronouncements of the law an adequate expression in the language which they use. The saving of a human life with its infinite possibilities of good or evil is worth how much? The whole healing process, the management of the public health, seems scarcely susceptible of determination as a mere industrial affair. The ministrations of religion, the uplifting of those sunken in the abyss, the awakening of a new consciousness in one overladen with the sordid accumulations of misused years, hardly, it may perhaps be said, belong to the methods of the counter, or the devices of the bank. One would be inclined to think that the three spheres are not directly commensurable, but are related by a principle of inclusiveness, the higher subordinating and using as an instrument the lower. So the whole

industrial realm exists solely for the production of a fine painting or a great poem or the doing of some entirely unselfish act.

The three learned professions evidently belong in the two higher spheres. They have established their authority on these planes. They have, however, been swept into the individualistic current. The passion of competition has seized on them as on the rest of mankind. The superman instead of considering himself as the coadjutor of the social movement has determined to be master of it. The three learned professions are themselves in the position of masterhood, and apparently have consented to be helpers of the other masters. The spirit of industrialism has cast about them its fascination as about the more unsophisticated propagators of the evangel. As a consequence the market place rings with the offer of commodities not expressible in the terms of the street, and the defense of purely individualistic interpretations of duties strictly social assumes a great variety of forms. The three learned professions have some sinister manifestations of their latest developments to face.

Indeed in a social system dominated by individualistic tendencies, the learned professions find themselves in a series of dilemmas with the danger of impalement on the horns thereof. The personal problem of placing abilities strengthened by assiduous effort at the service of the highest bidder has its unequivocal difficulties. Moreover to the man of large outlook the subservience to interests unspeakably selfish becomes a burden scarcely possible to be borne. The assistance of schemes distinctly at variance with the real advance of the community strains the back of patriotism to the breaking point. From the individualistic and competitive point of

view the problems are wholly unsolvable. Casuistry comes into play, at which the subtlest devices of the acutest predecessors sink into insignificance. The interference with the chief concerns of men does not deserve defenses set up by the best intelligence of the time.

The learned doctor also has his tribulations on his hands. His services too have descended into the chaffering mart. How can one make a scale of diseases, or indicate the value of activities that give relief from great agonies, or restore shattered health, or minister to a mind diseased? Moreover, the inequality of the service leaves one in singular amazement. Are lives distinguishable? Is health in one case more valuable than in another? So the comforter of souls has not succeeded in assuring release from the industrial turmoil. He too is swept into the hurly burly of supply and demand. Moreover he is confronted with the failures of mankind to make good in multitudes of ways. How much can he accomplish amid the aberrations that he finds about him? Shall he lose himself in taking arms against a sea of personalized iniquities or bring salvation only to those who already have it? His dilemma is no less poignant than are those of the others.

Furthermore we have the complications and contradictions that swarm in the systems under which the learned professions are obliged to operate. The law is a labyrinth so full of windings and offshoots and returnings that the man most learned in its mazes may be forgiven if he fails to find his way. The judges do not agree on matters essential to the commonwealth. The network of technicalities which can be woven about a cause makes a bandage which renders superfluous the one which is about the eyes in the conventional

statues. The layman is hopelessly in the dark, and the expert himself bewildered by the possible avenues up or down which he may go. A mighty maze apparently without a plan, and a new Justinian is needed to give it order and coherence.

The science of medicine to the one who is to be subjected to its ministrations appears likewise in a condition of such growth and development that he must be resigned to obey without the intervention of his own intelligence. There are all sorts of schools and he probably hears urgent defenses of each. There are moreover some contradictory aspects of the curative process which it would appear desirable to eliminate. A mistake has consequences rather appalling in its possibilities.

When one comes face to face with the third of the learned professions our bewilderment is perhaps on the increase. The writer had the good fortune to meet one of the distinguished mathematicians of the time. The great man was engaged on intricate formulations which made the calculus look as simple as the ordinary algebra. He was working out some curious expressions of what he called the personal equation. It would seem that everyone might have an equation which would represent the general tendencies of his intellect. There would be as many mathematical formulations of knowledge as there were persons on this terraqueous globe. When it comes to the last learned profession as at present constituted, the personal equation has a singular efficacy of application. The differences constituting the basis of elaborate speculations are assuredly of a sufficiently tenuous description, yet one must arrange his whole life according to some fundamental scheme, however vague and up in the

clouds it may seem. Altogether we are all of us surrounded by forest of contradictions, and it is the question how to find one's way out into the open beyond. The effect of these conditions on the three learned professions has not been entirely satisfactory. They have suffered the usual result of thrusting into the market place the commodities which in their best estate do not belong there. The quality of their activities has undergone deterioration.

It has also become increasingly clear that the term learned professions will allow of indefinite expansion. There are a great many other callings in which the professional spirit manifests itself. That wide acquaintance with whole systems of facts, that practical activity based upon large knowledge of the world, which distinguish the professor from the amateur, are to be found in many other arts and crafts. These latter too are adequately fitted to take upon themselves the management of great interests. They can fill diplomatic positions with credit, they can be legislators. There is no reason why they should not be the paramount officers of the state. The painters, the musicians, the sculptors, the writers of books, the teachers, the civil and other engineers are the rising learned professions of the day, with others too numerous to mention, and they are bound to reap the harvest which has been too long denied them. They have frequently been the mainspring of great nations, but they have lived in a sort of background; they are to come overtly forward and take the place to which they have long laid claim. Education is to be widened so as to afford play for the multiplicity of avocations now equally to be dignified with the name and the prerogative of the learned professions.

A further progress is the socialization of the learned pro-

fessions, all of them, the new ones as well as the old. In this process there appears a unification of the individualistic with the social tendencies. There will be no less of the initiative, which gives strength and fullness to manhood, but this complete freedom will be in all senses at the service of the republic. In all civilized countries education has been socialized with comparative completeness. The affair goes on bravely and brings more and more into its scope. The education offered by schools and universities is bringing more and more the whole of life into its reach, and there is a general recognition of the multiplicity of the learned professions. The teacher is a functionary of the state, and we are beginning to discover that his work is professional. There is no more significant movement in education than the rise, so rapid and efficient, of the state universities all over the western part of the United States of America. It is one of those advances in which the star of empire will eventually have to reverse its course, and turn back to the east again.

The other learned professions also call for a sufficient and progressive socialization. The solution of the questions environing them is to be found in this effort. No art, no science, nor profession can be left with safety to its own devices. In all the great ages of the world, literature and wisdom of all kinds have been social. The experiment of making everything individual has now been tried on a large scale, and it has proved on the whole a failure. Art to be great must express the social ideals, literature to be significant must have a story to tell which enlists the attention of mankind at its best — something more than the cheap trivialities of the daily life. Health is not a private affair at all, it is a matter of the commonwealth, and the latter is able to undertake it

in its full extent; justice is assuredly not a concern of the individual; if anything whatever is distinctly a social need, it is that every man should stand equally before the law, and the service of the supreme ability should be given to the poorest of men; in his *De Monarchia* Dante proposes a scheme of union between the Church and the State; it leaves them independent of each other and yet mutually in accord in the great work of the amelioration of men; the present has not yet realized the forecast of the thinker. In the socialization of all the learned professions, in making them all organically functionaries of the republic, in raising their labors in their nature incommensurable with the give and take of the market place above all ignoble chaffer, there seem to be both outlook and hope for a release from intolerable assaults now endangering the very existence of the social structure, which the whole endeavor of history has raised.

That is the genuine professional spirit as contradistinguished from the looseness and capriciousness of the amateur. It is based on a conviction of serviceableness to large and permanent concerns. The amateur can afford to play with his subjects; such results as he achieves end mainly with himself; he may have great skill, and accomplish many things; but the note of assurance is lacking, and the latter can only come when the real sturdy work of the world shines before him and inspires him. The professional spirit belongs to the forces which are bringing about the elevation and the amelioration of mankind. The individualistic spirit is essentially that of the amateur; it produces results with the stigma of small and narrow aims upon them. When the individual aggrandized as far as you please, panoplied in as

much power as he can get, advanced to such superb command of his developed abilities as is possible, places himself as superman at the call of the labors that are for the good of all, he emerges from his condition of amateur into that of the professional master of his art or science. The professions are all in their highest estate social, doing the general work of the planet, leading in the destiny of the race. The amateurship of the learned professions as shown in the past must give place to the genuine professional spirit, which in all lines of endeavor can only mean service of the best interests of the republic. The past was the time for the amateur; the future is the time of the professor.

The subject is a large one for a single article. The exposition requires the detail which refuses the limits of a rapid outline. Each of the three original learned professions calls for a chapter by itself. The subsequent and rising professions, which demand and have the right to be denominated learned, equally need lengthened discussion. The placing of the professions in the charge of the state with compensation from the commonwealth, with responsibility for the specialized work of the commonwealth, with chief service at the call of the commonwealth, is after all nothing new. It is only the enlargement of methods that have been adopted at various periods in the world's history. The project indicated has its beginnings to-day everywhere. Boards of health with a corps of doctors could look after the physical welfare of a city, boards of arbitration with a corps of lawyers could look after the litigation of citizens, boards of improvement with engineers and painters and sculptors could make a city beautiful. The monarchies in these matters have gone beyond the republics; the past in many ways has been better than the

present; there is no reason why any good thing wherever and whenever found should not have continuous adoption.

The honorable and remunerative position of the professional man is thus assured; his years of harsh novitiate can be either abbreviated or eliminated; his work can have the dignity of art work for its own sake; the commercial taint need not be upon it; things not expressible in terms of the mart should not be put up to the highest bidder; the best genius of the world can be at the service of the world and not arrayed against it; there can be ample leisure for original thought, high achievement, wonderful discovery; the fierce fever of ignoble competition is a disease only to be found ultimately in descriptions of a mistaken antiquity; the best thing a man can do is not his private property, but a public enlargement of the opportunities of all men and women, old and young.

Among the Symphonic Poems of Liszt there is one called *Les Preludes*. At its opening we hear a myriad voices apparently in conflict. Gradually one melody rises into eminence above the others. This is vague, but it seems from the first to have an authority to which the others yield, though it may be with some evident reluctance. The predominant theme works a perisistent transformation. It not only grows in strength and vividness, but, while leaving to each of the others a special quality, it yet makes them akin unto itself, and they advance in color and brilliancy with those of the rapidly mounting song. At last the great theme sweeps into mastery, the remaining voices accompany it, individualized as before and equal to it, but throughout their permanently different texture reflecting the splendor of the victorious chant. It is everywhere a premonition, a prophecy, a prelude

of that harmony which makes the individual, profoundly and ultimately, having lost neither ardor nor initiative, a bearer of purposes larger than himself, a reflection and an instrument of the whole of life and its permanent realizations.

EDUCATIONAL IDEALS — PAST AND PRESENT

MEN are prone to self-indulgence and self-satisfaction. The Past imposes its fetters of regulation upon us, and we are apt to find our wearing of them so restful and pleasureable that we should never, of our own accord and volition, seek to remove them. If the shock of liberation comes to us from without, we resent the intrusion upon our quiet, and beg to be left tranquil and undisturbed. The intellectual life has its prescriptions made venerable by the memory of the great ones, who have shaped, and joyfully submitted to them; the moral experience proceeds from phase to phase which the tears and anguish of the wise and noble have invested with a sacredness, perhaps not inherently belonging to them; nay, our very emotions, our nimblest fancies, our dreams of the night or summer afternoon undergo forms of mutations, and dance around, which, like all circles, finds its end in its beginning.

But all human conditions are evanescent, and in the heart of their flowerage and culmination carry the seed of their dissolution, and the promise and potence of subsequent realizations. However delightful may be the scenery and absence of occupation to be found in the land of the Lotus Eaters, where it is always afternoon and the pallid Sun is fronted by the paler shell of the Moon, a dazzled wanderer from her proper realm of gloom, in such mixed atmosphere it is not ours to linger long, much less to set up an abiding habitation. From some unexpected quarter of the horizon, we know

not when nor how, the cry of awakening sounds, and we are off to "fresh fields and pastures new." The spiritual world like the natural seems strangely fundamented upon a restless lake of fire, a verdurous island floating in that turbulent ocean, and the former seems even more subject to volcanic eruptions and earthquakes than the latter. A restless tendency to change seems to reside at the heart of the world, and the vast void of time is diversified, like bubbles blown from a child's lips, with manifestation on manifestation of spiritual potencies.

It is not otherwise in the educational realm. The inheritances of routine and curriculum descend to us, and we regard them with a veneration unquestionably just and eminently due. In accordance with these methods have great achievements been wrought, in defense of them eloquent and passionate pleas, whose echoes are not yet done sounding, have stirred men's emotions. They have justified themselves in doing the work expected of them, and have entered deeply into the fiber and substance of our existence. Moreover, they have imposed their restrictions upon ourselves; the old ways are easy to us; we do not care to wander from the old landmarks, and follow new guides whom we cannot wholly trust, and whose promises seem too large to be capable of fulfillment. In opposition to the fierce enthusiasm of Radicalism, the Conservative has assuredly a fair share of right on his side. It is not by a wholesale destruction of the Past that the New and Better is realized; it is rather by a reconstitution and resumption in a larger ideal, which makes itself valid, because it contains the more truth, and, in consequence, the higher self-justification. The air is literally full of educational theories; the old and accepted is tottering upon its apparently

unshakeable supports, and to the recent comers what reception shall be given?

I discuss my subject from a historical point of view, and trace some of the opinions now dividing the educational consciousness to a remote ancestry in the past. It is in that larger representation that we see truly what we are. History is a mask, in which, one by one, the contents of the human consciousness in appropriate guise and with fitted action and dénouement pass in necessity-linked procession before us that we may learn what we are, not by the more or less distorted representations set before the limited gaze of introspection, but by the revelation in space and time of the spirit's universal presuppositions. To study mind by the method of introspection alone is like looking at a landscape through the small end of an opera glass.

Civilization is a complex of many elements. In that resistless medium which contains the evolution of the race, no factor is stationary, but all reels in a bacchant maze of transformation and retransformation. From a condition of potentiality the idea of History proceeds to its own revelation in the seemingly solid concretions of sense-perception, only to resume them again into its own self-modified activity, and to make a later and more adequate revelation, because it contains all that preceded, and the " new wine " besides. In this process no element but doth suffer a " sea-change, into something rich and strange."

Modern educational theories like modern civilization are complexes of many elements, the inheritances of multitudes who toiled and suffered in the ages whose living echo remains perpetuated in us. The educator holds a two-fold relation to his time, a relation to himself and his ideals, the genuine

source of the new spirit, which prepares the advancement on the eve of being made, and a relation to the social consciousness in which he lives and moves and into whose dominant forms he is largely molded. The law of supply and demand holds in the educational world. Schools will furnish the article demanded by the best intelligence, let us say, of the community; but the law holds with this exception — that on the intellectual horizon of the individual educator, the precursor of the better time always to come in our conception and no longer as in the ancient world relegated to a remote and mythical past — on the intellectual horizon of the individual, I repeat, may dawn the ideal of greater things to do, fairer results to achieve, finer methods to use, which, as one flame is lit from another, may pass from his to others, till the community, not without objection and invective, has reached his platform, and mankind has taken another step forward. But our ideals being thus woven of many elements are difficult to grasp in their entirety; mental predisposition and the ingrained indolence with which I began leads us to emphasize certain factors to the exclusion of others. Abstraction is so easy, the concrete whole is so hard to grasp in its organic self-relation, that we are really Greek, or Roman, or Medieval or Puritanic in our preconceptions and purposes, while the modern ideal is all of these and more, not any one in isolation and consequent untruth.

The old Greek life retains an imperishable fascination. What that marvelous people achieved in their rocky and sea-washed peninsula, an infinitesimal unit of the earth's expansion, in their brief two centuries of blossom and fruit, would be incredible if it had not been. According to Plato in the *Republic,* the Greek education can be generalized under two

terms, Music and Gymnastics. But as in the writings of all the great thinkers, Plato's technical terms contain a substantiality of significance which the terms in their ordinary use do not, and which requires to be fully elicited. Music — the theoretics of life; Gymnastics — the practics of life. If ever a nation realized the "*mens sana in corporo sano*" it was the Greek. The Greek boy was brought up in the study of Homer and Hesiod; he was instructed in dialectical subtleties and public speaking in the schools of the rhetoricians, for he might be called upon to plead his own cause in a court of law, or take his place at proper age in the councils of the nation. The study of nature had but begun and was looked on with more or less disfavor. In the religious pageants he was required to take a part; he was a soldier and might at short notice he called to take his place in battle. Nothing menial or trafficking was required of him; for all that there were slaves and those willing to descend to the coarseness of merchandise. But in addition to all this, physical excellence was demanded of him. In the gymnasium he saw the human form in its living perfection; in the friezes of the Parthenon, and the streets of the cities, he saw the unsurpassable works of a sculptor, and the harmonies of an architecture, which, as Lowell says, "are the one thing perfect in this hasty world." The streets of Greece were literally avenues of statuary. The drama and the games were at once instructors in Music and Gymnastics. The spectacle of the young Sophocles leading the choric song after the victory of Salamis made visible to the young Greek the ideal of his country. Refinement, culture, beauty, charm, were here to be found in all their completeness. But this splendor was built upon a moral earthquake, and in time old Seismos toppled into ruins the

superstructure so gloriously wrought. The greatest thinker of modern times, perhaps of all time, has said that "The Orient knew that one man, the monarch, was free; Greece knew that many men, a privileged class, were free; it remained for the Teutonic and western world to discover that all men are free." Slavery and unredeemed individualism paved the way to Greece's overthrow. The individual was prior, the State secondary. Of the family one may, perhaps, say that practically it had no existence. Alcibiades, and Pausanias, the general, could accomplish the overthrow of their respective countries to gratify a personal revenge. It was reserved for a sterner people to demonstrate that life was not all sensuous charm, but devotion to ethical institution, to duty, as well.

The education of the Roman boy was of a less poetic sort. The ethical consciousness of the Roman was far deeper than that of the Greek. The family was a reality to which every member owed unquestioning allegiance; the Lares and Penates, representatives of family traditions and guardian influences, were appropriately the first objects seen on entering a Roman dwelling. Fathers had a power almost unlimited in the domestic circle, and even marriage did not consummate the emancipation of sons. But the deepest feeling of the Roman was devotion to the fatherland. To be a Roman in that elder day was better than to be a king. Their ballad mythology, which always so truthfully reflects the popular feeling and conception, is full of instances of marvelous sacrifice for the sake of country. The ideal Roman knew of no distinction between himself and his country; the latter was himself, and all he was and had were hers. His education was of a correspondential character. The earlier poets of his

country, gnomic and agricultural writers, afterwards Virgil, whose most distinctive work is of the didactic order, constituted a meager curriculum. It is noticeable that the only original literary form to be found among the Romans is the Moral Satire, a form of composition singularly adapted to a people whose idea of poetry seems to have somewhat of the Pope-and-Dryden order; a highly ornate and more or less musical fashion of dressing up moralities and useful instruction in the arts and sciences. But a strong belief in the validity of human volition as a force in the world is invincible; the will after all is the only power we genuinely know, and external forces are identifiable with it. Conscious in himself of the might to conquer, the Roman went forth, and conquered the world. He gave laws to mankind, and we have not outgrown them yet. The stern old Puritans had more of the stuff of old Rome in them than they would have been willing to confess. But an abstract will is only another name for tyranny. A single government of the world necessarily falls into collision with itself; local interests demand justification against the general weal. This antithesis must be resolved in a higher unity; this the ancient world was unable to do, and hence, after Rome the deluge, the chaos of the so-called Dark Ages, concreting into separate States, whose problem is the great one of the modern era, the equilibration of independent authorities, the union of central government and sovereign dependencies.

The wonderful Middle Age — dark we call it, some one has said, because we know so little about it; but with the growth of our knowledge grow our respect and admiration. The age of Dante, the age of Giotto, the age of St. Thomas Aquinas and the German Mystics has as much claim to glory

as any that follows. But what a change from the serene world of artistic achievement, or the world of unfaltering consciousness of full power to do what is conceived as worthy to be done!

The barbarian hordes bring the grotesqueness of wood and rocky plain, the ruggedness and wildness of the northern imagination, the seriousness and melancholy of the Gothic spirit into contact with the lighter and more joyous civilizations of the Mediterranean. Moreover the new Faith had spoken; "the Kingdom of Heaven is within you," and the antagonism between subject and object, between the inner life which constitutes the man, and the outer which is his helper and sustainer, is intensified. With literal interpretation the subjectivity of mankind is considered all that is ennobling and worthy; the world and nature are the work and domain of the Devil. Monasticism and its inherent difficulties are reflected in the stories of the temptations of saints, and their victories over legions of evil spirits. The modern problem of the impassable chasm which yawns between knowing and being, between the inner representation and the outer reality, makes its appearance. Strange hallucination that the very deed which creates the thing should not contain it; that the act of knowing should be the revelation of the hopeless impossibility to know! Then the majestic spectacle of an infallible church, the enchanting songs of Troubadour and Minnesinger, the appearance of national epics like the *Niebelungenlied,* the passion of the Crusades, the vigorous individualism fostered by the feudal system, the logic and profound theology of the schoolmen, the beginnings of natural science, — for with the segregation of mind and nature, the latter becomes an object of real investigation, —

the new art of building so different and so profounder than the old, furnish factors to an educational scheme which fell to our inheritance, and has largely made us what we are. The gorgeous Saracen culture with its reproduction of the Aristotelian philosophy filled men's minds and souls with something of the elder love of learning and harmonious beauty.

Then comes the great Renaissance, the new birth of beauty, that second age of Pericles so like and so unlike the first. But everything in the Middle Age tends to the development of the individual; before the bar of the subjective reason all truth, all deductions, all institutions must validify themselves; and the great Reformation is not far off. The infinite worth of the individual soul, its equipoise against a whole dissenting world, the universality of its highest utterances, is contained in the epoch-making words, "Here I stand; I can no other; God help me." A new world comprehension has arisen. A detailed account of the curriculum in vogue during these periods is here needless. What the ideal of education under such conditions must be, ought to be tolerably plain: Theology, logic, language, in amplest measure, mathematics as it relates to the arts, fine and otherwise, science mainly in the direction of medicine. Astrology, no doubt, is incipient astronomy; alchemy, incipient chemistry; but science is mythologic in its earlier phases, a truth which Comte so ingeniously misconstrues in his scheme of philosophy. The courses of study and scholastic methods thus formed became stereotyped, and possessed in men's minds of the sacredness which appertains very soon to all things old. The Puritanic narrowness and severity only served to fasten the yoke of this educational tyranny more immovably, and deprived it rapidly of the elements of freedom and fluidity it formerly

owned; education became, at least in this country, such as was admirably adapted to form a minister of the Jonathan Edwards type.

The Middle Age epoch in genuine life had come to an end; the institutions and formulas, once alive as a tree is alive in its numberless leaves, and nourishing the noblest endeavors of the race, had lost their meaning, but survived as bondages upon the limbs of the new spirit. The old sought to impose its circumscriptions upon the new life that flooded the spiritual veins and arteries of mankind, the new gush of inspiration from the divine heart of the world. Descartes and Spinoza had written; Wolff in Germany had formulated in his somewhat mechanical way the rising belief; Leibnitz and Newton had recreated mathematics; Bacon in a limited true fashion had written upon Method. Everything was ominous of a convulsion and it came. The Encyclopedists in France prepared the way, and the storm of the great revolution burst.

The French Revolution opens a new era in the world's history. Everything is to be reduced to its lowest terms. All subjects are to be reinvestigated from their foundations and naught is to be accepted merely because it has immemorial usage in its favor. The éclaircissement is to be complete; the Cartesian universal doubt is to be made real, and institutions, religion, education are to be reconstituted. However shallow much of the skepticism of the time was, however futile the philosophic endeavor of D'Holbach, De La Mettrie, and Diderot, a reconsideration of the problems of the world was necessary, and the inauguration of the restless modern spirit was fairly achieved.

We may find the character of Rousseau revolting, his

theories illogical and half thought out; we may agree with the famous Voltairean criticism on his return to nature, that after reading his book we are so convinced of the propriety of the return to nature that we feel like getting down on all fours at once; but the need of educational reform as announced by him was indeed only too apparent, the artificiality and comparative inutility of conventional procedures only too clear. The return to nature was indispensable, or rather a complete discussion of educational problems from "turret to foundation stone" was preëminently demanded, and Rousseau, with all his follies and extravagances upon him, was the van of the advancing array. Modern needs, modern social demands, modern questions of spirit and destiny were to be heard in fashioning the educational creed.

Then appears the great Pestalozzi. The real individual had become paramount; his formal freedom had been vindicated in the thunder of battle and the blood of the fallen. Before the bar of subjectivity everything must justify itself if it is to be justified at all. The object is thus thrust into bold antithetic relief. The intervening wrappages of custom and conventionality had been shriveled like flax in the fires of revolution. So Pestalozzi announces his principle: the thing itself is to be studied, not what has been said and resaid about it. Stale repetitions of the same old story, the same old errors, become denser and grosser and more numerous with the lapse of years. Education is to be based on the determination of the thought of mankind by the object; things are not to be woven out of moral consciousness like the German's famous camel; the ideality of the race is to be brought into strict correspondence with the reality of the world environing it. With natural science, or rather the so-called exact

sciences, mind is to bury itself in the object until it puts off its own substance, and becomes that other. No personal equations, no individual caprice, no coloring of prejudgment or theory are to intervene. Determination by the objects is the watchword; the elimination of the conventional, the consecrated by time but musty with errors, the merely subjective, is essential.

But is not such subserviency of the inner to the outer a slavery and a degradation? An abnegation of personality? A descent from mind into matter? Not so, answers Froebel, Spirit is essentially active, self-directive; into the charmed circle of its motions nothing external can enter save it takes on the guise and habiliments of spirit, and the so-called outer, since it exists in strict and necessary relation to consciousness, has thrown around and wears all through it the dominating laws of thinking. No law is a thing; it is a general concept only expressible in terms of mind. Matter, when closely examined, vanishes into equilibria of forces, and force is a category of thought. Into this endeavor spirit throws itself freely and makes of it a play, not a work; the plays of childhood are the immediate manifestations of freedom; they are to be regulated into the genuine realization of free activity in its necessary forms of search for beauty, goodness, truth. The outer shows itself dominated by the laws of spirit; the inner is built into a complete representation of these laws, and finds thus its real freedom, the outer world being nothing alien to it, but the means of its highest development.

In life of the nineteenth century all these streams converge. To grasp them in their unity and necessary relation is a matter of some difficulty. We are each of us inclined to seize what is more or less akin to our characters and

emphasize that. What is in reality an abstraction, a part of the whole, we grasp, analyze, perceive its importance, become oblivious to its dependencies and shortcomings, and essay to make universally applicable. In this country where all endeavors have the largest opportunity of development, education in common with the rest shows itself at large in its various ideals, consummating respectively some tendency of the past that has had its heyday and flush of blood and vanished into the silences that are so pathetic and so inevitable. Every partial perishes; only the generic, the universal, has eternal life. The Greek Ideal, the Roman, the Medieval survives in our time, masquerades in its abstractness, and yields up its life as a sacrifice on the altar of the universal. The conflicts of education theories are often conflicts that history has settled long ago and the lesson to be learned from them is plain.

There is first the Culture Ideal. "Sweetness and light," in the words of one of its distinguished expounders, are its watchword; clearness of intellectual vision, and suavity and graciousness in practice, not necessarily robustness or moral perception or activity. Literature, language, history as a record of noble and striking events not as a science (of that it has a wholesome horror) are its strongholds. For science it has less use; for mathematics so much as the usage sanctions. The possibilities of man as man are insisted on; absorption in any special pursuit strenuously decried. It has distinctly conservative, not to say aristocratic predispositions, and with Carlyle cannot see how by the multiplication of fools, and their combined fooleries, whether of vote or opinion, wisdom is to result. It has a high opinion of itself and justly. In a mechanical and utilitarian age, the high priests of culture

and the transcendental, the exponents of the "beauty" of goodness and truth are eminently indispensable. They inspire and bring us to believe in the potency of the unseen; they shatter the bonds of that which, as Goethe said, binds us all, the commonplace; they are in very truth prophets and seers; they induct us into the study of Fine Arts, the appreciation of noble poetry, the losing ourselves in the infinite ecstasy of a music that is the inmost motion and lifeblood of things, a music written, as Emerson says of poetry, before time was, and into whose serene dominions it is ours to penetrate at will. The apprehension of the subtleties of languages is indispensable to the education that is to be. The philological and historical arguments in favor of the study of the classical languages and literatures will always remain incontrovertible.

Then we have the Moral Ideal. With the Puritanic paste in the composition of most of us, the sense of duty and personal responsibility is surely developed into sufficient intensity. Man is not, it is said, solely intellectual; he is also emotional and volitional; he is not a mere logic machine, but a creature with loves and hates, with deeds to perform, with a destiny to fulfill. Lessons in propriety of deportment, moral instructions of all sorts are to be interpolated in the curriculum.We are to have more cultivation of the affections, less attention to mere intellectual refinements. Theorists of this kind seem to forget that lessons in morality are no appeal to the moral sense whatever, but are, strange to state, addressed to the interest. *A Critique of Practical Reason* is far from being an incitement to activity of any sort. It is a calm and scientific discussion of the whole moral problem, and requires a fair share of intellect for its comprehension. Be-

sides, the antagonism between the rational and moral is a wholly fictitious one; if morality is not rational are we therefore to conclude that it is irrational? If feeling and will are not forms of reason, but forms of unreason, their culture becomes a matter of the worst supererogation, and the sooner we are divested of them entirely the better for us, because it is assuredly our destiny to grow eternally into higher rationality. Also, conduct is best taught by insisting on the best conduct always, and thus converting what is spasmodically good into what is habitually so. Moral lessons are unquestionably of the highest value and utility; but too much of them tends to become a mere repetition of monotonous and hollow phrases, and ends in weariness and vexation of spirit.

Then we have the Religious Ideal. There seems to exist in many minds a lurking distrust of the separation between Church and State. The logic of events is inexorable in executing its projects, but is not therefore convincing. It is not long since the remark was made in an enlightened city, not overmuch given, perhaps, to sentimental religious musings, that the Reformation of Luther was the greatest misfortune that has happened to mankind, and has set back the genuine progress of the race many centuries. Religious ideals are always to be treated with the greatest reverence; of all manifestations of the human spirit, religion is the most sacred and perhaps the noblest. To the religious mind a purely secular culture must seem dangerous and misleading. Nothing is so easy, nothing so deadening, nothing so unfortunate, as a cheap skepticism fond of discovering contradictions, which exist only in its misapprehension, a shadowy and ghostlike reminder of the exploded sophisms still venturing into the daylight of the nineteenth century, although the

signal for their everlasting burial past resurrection sounded long ago. But after all, a secular education, clarifying the intellect and imposing on the caprice of the race freely accepted limitations, will prove a sounder foundation for real religious culture than a premature and bewildering induction into clashing creeds and dogmas only the most exalted reason can comprehend and validate.

Then we have the Scientific Ideal. It is a little singular how inevitably all partial views reproduce the characteristics which they came into existence to repugn. Every abstraction, being limited or determined, is of necessity confronted by that which limits or determines it. Ostrichlike, it may shut its abstract eyes to its opposite, but the latter is sure to have its revenge in the end. That which limits, containing the true being of that which it limits, eventually imposes its properties upon it. So the Scientific Ideal springing from an abhorrence of the religious or dogmatic ideal ends in becoming itself more religious and dogmatic than what it opposed. It is well illustrated in French positivism which began by being severely empirical, and terminated by establishing a pope in the person of its founder, and a religion following the ecclesiology of the Romish Church; and the English positivist poet sings hymns addressed to the "*Grand Être,*" or Humanity, or Hertha, the Norse earth goddess, constructs liturgies and borrows the major part of his imagery from the Bible.

The scientist plumes himself on the closeness of his relation to the practical world, and the education which he advocates is copiously lauded as the only one appropriate to the times. At best, science relates itself mostly to mechanical and industrial pursuits; moreover the scientists are not agreed among themselves in reference to the limits they set in their

scheme of instruction; and the relation of isoperimetry in mathematics and quantivalence in chemistry, for example, to practical life is no clearer than logic or empirical psychology. If the ground is shifted to the greater certitude of physical sciences, the fact is in the first place delusive, and in the second dependent upon their greater abstractness; a fact which detracts from their utility since life deals not with the abstract but the concrete. The quantitative standard is no more applicable to the highest physical truths than to the highest spiritual, and in the end we are forced to find our criterion of truth in the nature of thought itself. The immense strides of science, and the importance of its method, make it indispensable to give it a fair representation in the curriculum, but there is no reason for going over bag and baggage to the enemy. "*Timeo Danaos et dona ferentes.*"

Finally we have the Practical Ideal. Theory is still preparation for the actual, and this demand is one necessary to be heeded, but, perhaps, not exactly in the way usually urged. The education furnished by the school must be corresponsive to the needs of the community, and preparative for the actual; can practically have no other meaning. Success in directions which the community considers noteworthy is urgently required, and the school must lay the foundation for such. Surely we have no reason to decry the great figures in modern civilization; if the business man, the mechanic, the manufacturer, the banker, have an estimation in our day beyond any hitherto accorded them, educators will find it little to their profit or success to fly in the face of the potent existing sentiment, and be shattered hopelessly, as ships upon a lee shore of mighty rocks. The modern business man grasping in one view vast and complicated enterprises, understand-

ing the fluctuations of trade throughout a continent, controlling wealth at which the greatest monarch of the world might become envious, bringing to successful completion projects whose details are as numerous as those involved in the supervision of a Napoleonic army, is not a person who will be pooh-poohed out of existence, or an ideal which preachments can make unattractive to youthful and enthusiastic minds. But the supporters of so-called practical education forget that all education deals with generalities. The manual-training schools cannot descend to the particularities of special trades; and the world is pretty well agreed that the best basis for specialized technical training is an acquaintance with those larger conventionalities of intelligence which are the foundations of all rational action. Goethe says that to "the uneducated man, everything he does is a mere trade; the intelligent man in doing one thing well, sees therein how to do all things well," and has that kind of enlarged understanding, which brings with it rapid insight, mastery of details. Self-possession in the presence of difficult undertakings cannot arise from absorption in the manifold, but must come from communion with those universal laws that are inclusive and enlightening.

What outlook for the future? Adjustment and reconciliation, deeper comprehension of work and method, surer interconnection of more numerous particulars, larger freedom of action, more fluidity in course, and nobler results. Not any ideal has shown itself to be finally valid; and in the nature of things no ideal can be; human life is a constant progress into the higher and better, and catches in each advance a glimpse of the infinitude which belongs to it. The remorseless criticism of Time strews the Past with the wrecks of

educational systems as with those of states and dynasties. Our business is inclusive, not exclusive; the education of the future will be scientific, businesslike, practical, for all these interests have claims unquestionable and irrevocable; but it will not cease to be devoted to culture in its best sense, it will not cease to be spiritual. We may find room in it for moral science and empirical psychology; for the world must outgrow the senseless dictum that all we know is sense — a dictum which common sense, the best and most uncommon kind of sense, utterly contradicts. Nay, I venture to add, it will not cease to be religious; not religious in the sense of sect or dogma, but religious in being permeated by a faith in those universal and beneficent potencies, — personal potencies, not vague and pantheistical generalities, — which are the supporters of life and thought, in which we literally live and move and have our being, and without a belief in which life, indeed, becomes not worth the living.

THE FASCINATION OF PESSIMISM

THAT a doctrine which assumes the world and everything in it to be evil should have a fascination seems strange, and yet such appears to be the fact. From the thoughtless votary of idle pleasure to the deep thinker on the framework of the universe, the sinister influence of the doctrine spreads, and the religious books of the races have a chapter devoted to the expression, how hopeless is life and the loves which concern themselves with it. The transitoriness of all things, and the impossibility of finding a resting place anywhere, have been the oft-repeated burden of poems and prophecy. Men have flown to every sort of refuge from the consciousness that goodness is not to be found in the earth, and built up strange and fantastical abiding places for their souls, which the next bold wind of opinion has swept into the abyss to crumble away with so many predecessors. Yet the doctrine of the prevalence of evil abides still, and raises its voice in our own time with all its wonted piercing vigor.

The pessimistic doctrine has had many forms, but their central purport is everywhere the same. The outward clothing of thought varies with the climate and skies and scenery amid which it rises into temporal manifestation, but the thought in itself passes through its own modifications, and displays everywhere its unchanging and eternal characteristics. That all pleasure is hollow and self-limited, and, if pushed too far in its headlong course, must end in its oppo-

site, pain, is a message which we hear announced in every variety of accent and cadence. That the activities of mankind are devoid of genuine results, and that what we now esteem indispensable for the best behoof of all will be found as futile as so many precedent efforts, is dinned into our ears by the saint and the sinner. That the search for truth is a hopeless undertaking, and ends only in a labyrinth, wherein we more and more lose our way, the farther we penetrate, is told us by the skeptical scientist on the one hand, and the believer in a mysterious faith or illumination on the other. The bold speculator on this state of affairs does not shrink from the perilous precipice toward which he is ever moving, but makes the plunge at once by affirming the meaninglessness of all life, the nothingness of all its endeavors, and the exquisiteness of the extinction which is certain, and whose recognition is the one infallible good in which an experience perforce must terminate.

The birth of the doctrine of pessimism is afar off in the dateless period before the flight of time had known how to measure or enumerate itself. With the necessities of life and labor thrust upon him in harsh and abhorrent conditions, man might well in a first rough and rapid survey find the world throughout the expression of evil and hostile potencies. There is a philosophy quite prevalent at the present time which finds the origin of all supernatural agencies, as they reflect themselves in the general consciousness, in the emotions of horror and fear with which the world at first impressed the primeval man. Gradually these emotions crystallized and became definite, and out of that nebulous confusion were precipitated the images of gods, capricious and malevolent, and at intervals showing a kindlier and

more persuasive aspect. On the other hand, we find a theory which posits a supernal goodness over all things, whose efforts for the amelioration of its creatures are somehow thwarted, and require a miraculous interposition to restore the lost equilibrium. In either case there enters a certain arbitrariness before which the baffled reason may shrink appalled, and either give itself up to a dependence upon some superinduced and inexplicable faith, or, recognizing its own impotence, take up such tasks as suit its own varying temperament and hopes, and shut out further thought on the subject. Reason has at least one consolation: it can decide, and that decision makes it, individually at least, superior to both attempted explanations of this strange and moving scene around and above it.

Thus long ago the wisdom of the king and preacher found everything under the sun vain and unprofitable. Pleasure in its excess turns into its own opposite; enjoyment perishes of its own extreme and blossoms as it were into weariness and pain. The burden of riches resolves itself into various forms of outpouring and giving whose generosity will not bear the scrutiny of a too close inquiry. As Socrates observes, pleasure and pain come into the world together, and whoever seizes the one discovers that he has brought with it the other. The sacred Book deals with the problem, and, sweeping through the visible world, the great king sees that everything is imperfect, and that he cannot content himself with any manner of life that reveals itself on the earth. The conclusion of the whole matter is to rise into a consciousness of an eternal that makes for righteousness, and square one's thought and action with that. The demonstration of the futility of all endeavor seems more cogent than the counter conclusion, and the latter

is not without a certain vehemence of assertion, which indicates that it is held perforce, and rests upon an emotional vagueness, which shrinks from an analysis that might perhaps dispel a long-held illusion. But it is noticeable that, in a sacred Book whose object is to reveal every form of spiritual development, the pessimistic consideration of the world has found a place, and that the voice and outcry against the universal evil are more piercing and strenuous than the final "Fear God and keep His commandments," with which the passage terminates. The king, on his throne and in the height of his splendor, could not hide from himself the bitterness which lay at the center of everything, and his consolation was only a cry of faith, as it were, from the depths of despair.

But the pessimistic fascination has exercised its chief energy on a large scale under the warmer skies and intenser historic conditions of India. To be convinced of the hopelessness of all endeavor is sad enough, but to be at the same time debarred from even practicing that hopelessness is worse. In a condition of things where all life is cast into changeless molds, and the birth of man into eventualities with whose creation he has nothing to do, fetters and binds him into only certain modes of activity, there is the assurance that despair will arise and flourish. Where, as Hegel says, only one man is free to do as he wills, the remainder of mankind have small reason to rejoice at the hour which thrust them into life and servitude at the same time. The reality of the world around us is assured to us by the fact that we can put our wills into it, and make it conform to our nobler ideals, and, if that privilege be taken away from us by merely fortuitous accidents of birth, we are very near to considering it all a delusion, and looking out eagerly for some salvation

from its grinding changefulness and bitter reminding us of our ignominious dependence.

Asia has never done anything by halves. Her civilizations have been colossal, her arts have had the same characteristics, her tyrannies have been beyond those of other lands. The native of Hindustan found his life crushed into forms which stifled every hope and every aspiration. His gods were not only jealous gods, but resolutely refused to recognize more than a very small segment of his existence. He was born into a caste, and out of it he could move only through incredible and next to impossible renunciations and asceticisms. The favored Brahmin stood at the doors of heaven, and denied entrance to anyone not of his creed and kind. The sovereigns squandered on their moods and pleasures the immense earnings of their groaning subjects. The human will everywhere was depressed and aborted, the objects which alone make life worth the living were unattainable, and the inevitable consequences ensued. The pessimistic doctrine hung over the whole land, a vast cloud obscuring the sun.

Under those deep blue skies and amid that tropical scenery the thought of men flew far, and the imagination woke to a strange and intense life. Denied outer expression, except on the large scale which the monarch demanded, the nation fell back into a dream consciousness, in which the reality of the world faded away and vanished. The whole outer realm swam in a mist of illusion, and it was doubtless a comfort and a consolation to believe that all this scene of crime and cruelty and rapine had no genuine existence, was only a changing vapor speeding before the eyes, an error of the sense-ridden consciousness, maya, a disastrous vision from which the sooner riddance was obtained the better. But could

there be any beyond to this fleeting show, this terrible mirage made up of so many contradictions, and permeated with wrong and injustice and misery? There might be vision after vision, birth after birth into the same conditions, but they were all but repetitions of the original error, but recurrences of the same sense delusion, but resurgences of the same dreamworld from which complete deliverance was to be found at last; and that deliverance could be only the entrance into a region which was wholly insusceptible of description, to which might be ascribed all wonder and splendor, but which was strictly inexpressible, which admitted hardly of an appellative, and which contradicted itself in calling itself Nirvana, the empty, the vague, the ineffable, the unknowable, the nought.

The story of Gautama, the Light of Asia, carries with it the whole of these experiences in their strongest and most typical expression. The Light of Asia, after all, is very different from the Light of Europe, except in those mystical explanations of the latter which, placing it in a realm above that of the highest reason, deprive it of the luster which belongs to it, and make it, instead of a lamp shedding radiance upon the path before us, a mere ineffable darkness, which is not differenced from the supposititious and characterless gloom into which the Asiatic was happy to go out of the oppression and sadness which encompassed him around.

The Savior of Asia recognized the terrible conditions under which his fellow men were groaning; he saw as well that the revolution which would overthrow those conditions was one that ages alone could effect; he saw as well that the life which proceeded on such bases and with such limitations could not be really life at all; it was maya, illusion, a phan-

tasmal fleeting past the gazer of a pageant which his own consciousness had created; indeed that consciousness also was merely a part of the dream; and the sooner release was obtained from the whole the better. But how was such release to be obtained? By renunciation; by the giving up one by one of all the relations which men held dear; by stifling all thought and aspiration; by making the consciousness of man a vacancy and a blank. The prince, Gautama, proceeds to divest himself of his rank and his titles; he abandons his wife and his home; he becomes the wandering mendicant and reformer. He enters upon the difficult and complicated path whose termination is to be the entire extinction of the self and all its processes. He must not only renounce, but he must renounce the renunciation, lest a vestige of selfhood or pride in his great sacrifice should remain. Out of the depths of his memory his past lives and experiences float before him, he finds that he has in previous existences made the same effort, but has failed again and again; he has been man in all his manifestations; at last he attains; he is freed from the illusion; he is wholly divested of form or being; he is lost in Nirvana, pure negation, unchangeable sameness, light which is darkness, life which is death, mystical and unspeakable supremacy, blankness, nonentity. He becomes the great savior and teacher of mankind; he will lead his followers by the same difficult path unto the same goal, which is no goal at all, to the same victory, which is only the most overwhelming defeat, to the same being, which is only the summit of abstraction, the attainment of nonbeing, of the Nought.

This is the great consummation; the world, which was only evil, has wholly vanished; the consciousness, which was

only pain, has disappeared; the life, which was only suffering, has ended forever. The transition from state to state, from one manner of existence to another, is over, maya or illusion has been snatched from the gaze that created it, that gaze itself has passed away, grief is wholly at an end, and the pessimistic negation is complete. It has devoured up everything, itself included, and we are supposed to be in the presence of the Supreme Inane.

There is certainly something of high and remarkable consolation in such a view, if we admit beforehand that all life is necessarily accompanied with pain and misery. Granted a society in which endeavor is forever balked, in which effort is always without result, it must be a supreme blessing to be rid entirely of conjunction with failure and defeat. To sit in one and the same posture for years, to subsist upon chance charity, to deaden the body, and to lose mind and thought in a changeless dream, to be calm and serene and emotionless as the Buddha is represented in statue and painting, must be happiness and success, when all action is perforce a foregone destruction of itself and a proof of its own incapacity.

And yet the contradiction involved in such a view of the world must be at once apparent. The abstraction from every form of existence can only terminate in the attempt to abstract from that very abstraction, and the effort so to do brings always again into play the activity which is sought to be avoided. Even to think the Nought or Nirvana brings again into visibility the world of life and distinctions from which we have tried so hard to escape. The more we strive to release ourselves from this dilemma the more we are entangled in it, and the more we are obliged to conceive of an

endless series of births and rebirths, which are all of them sources of pain and anguish, and we can only conclude the hopeless labor by a leap in the dark, and a desperate assertion that there is a something beyond it all which is indescribable, and which has all the qualities or no qualities that we are so anxious to realize. So the East Indian passes from birth to birth, and arbitrarily posits his Nirvana at the close, but that, too, on scrutiny is but a new birth, and so on forever. The agony of pessimism intensifies with the realization that escape from itself is impossible, and that the void which it looks for is always a resurgence of what it so profoundly longs to be freed from.

There must be something, however, in this dark conception, which has a real and organic relation to life and thought, or it would not persist as it does, and appear and reappear all along the course of history. Making a great leap, we come under the Roman Empire to a state of affairs which has some marked resemblances to the one which we have been trying to describe. Life had again turned upon itself, and was asking the question: Is it indeed worth anything, is it of any value or significance, is its misery counterbalanced by gains that are permanent, and of such reality that to purchase them at any price, however high, is an endeavor reasonable and justifiable?

The Roman had conquered the world, and was then conquered in his turn. The sovereignty which had swept through all lands now made as it were a conquest of itself, and became its own tyrant and misgovernor. With haughty caprice seated in the emperor's chair, and suspicion surrounding every life and penetrating into its very privacy, what possibility was there of real activity? There was no need

of thought, for to what end could thought lead? Besides, thinking was dangerous, as it might perchance leap over into deed.

The philosophers take up the problem of the world and invent two outlets from the prevalent misery. Both solutions were essentially negative and really begged the question in issue. The later Stoics, Seneca with his followers, and the Epicureans, alike admitted the omnipresence of evil and alike shrank from the speculative investigation of ultimate causes. The chasm between the world as it ought to be, and as it is, remained unbridged; escape from the miseries of life might be had by a rise into wisdom and divinity, but the omnipresence of those miseries was a gloom in which philosophy gave a light that only served to make that gloom more visible. The Stoic settled himself into a majestic calm, neither pain nor pleasure should overmaster him; the release which he courted was not, as in the Oriental world, some objective realm reachable after long and weary endeavor, but was within himself. The highest in life was utter peace, majestic superiority. The Epicurean found the gods a somewhat superfluous machinery, quite outside and forgetful of the worlds which they had created. They sat on high in their mighty enjoyments, and the puppets, who dwelt upon the earth or perchance in other planets, might go their puny ways without consideration from them. The latter in their turn had little call to propitiate their forgetful masters, and might best pursue such avocations as gave the highest and most permanent pleasure. After death each element returned to the reservoir from which it came; fire to the general fire of the universe, breath to the winds, dust to the earth, water to the great sea, and the soul was dissipated with the passing

away of its foundations. Refinement, exquisite delights, poetry, music, these were the whole of life, and as to the morrow, why when we arrived, it would not be at all. In Pater's *Marius, the Epicurean,* the two world-views are brought into contact and interaction. Marius is associated with the Stoic Emperor, Marcus Aurelius Antoninus. The Emperor is noble, wise, serene, but Marius finds in him some inexplicable defect. His own Epicurean tendencies finally appear to him as little satisfactory, and he prepares to take upon himself the martyrdom of a higher and more positive faith.

When we come into the Middle Age, we find the pessimistic cloud again presenting itself, though in a very different guise. One might suppose that with the recognition of God as the Father of men, and with a prevalent worship of maternity in the Virgin, the world would have appeared as a beneficent scene of action, whose every motion was calculated for the best behoof and development of mankind. But not quite so. With the passionate belief in the reality of the soul came the denial of reality in the external scene in which that soul was to play its part, or rather that scene was handed over to Satan and his sinister powers, and everything natural became, just because it was natural, the source of all evil and unhappiness. With such emphasis placed upon the spiritual, one-sided humanity as usual did scant justice to the body and its environment. The gods of the heathen had by no means disappeared; they often haunted their original abodes, or migrated to woods and mountains and there lay in wait for unwary travelers to entrap them into evils from which there was no redemption. The story of the Tannhäuser is one of those legends; the Venus of the old mythologies dwells

in the recesses of a great cavern, and allures the Knight to participation in her heathen rites and enjoyments. He is only saved by the intercession of Elizabeth, who dies for him and expiates his sin.

But the mystics of the time afford a marvelous study. They recognize and express with fierce intensity the evils which beset the state of man, and they present to him an outlet from these evils which is not wholly unlike those which had been offered in previous periods. There came the same tremendous injunction to renounce and to re-renounce, to flee from friends and home and to seek sanctuary in convent and monastery, or to abandon humanity altogether and hide in the mountains or the deserts; then again by fastings and meditations to attain unto the ultimate good. This ultimate good is again described as the indescribable, as the light which is darkness, as the life which is death. In swoons and trances the ecstasy is attained, but no man having attained can speak of it, as it is wholly beyond all speech, all thought, all reason. It is not the essence of the world, it is more than essence; it is not the mind of man, it is more than the mind of man; it is not rational, it is more than rational; it is supereminent, the superlucent, supereffable.

But we must come to modern times. The characteristic of the modern era is self-consciousness; it has reflected upon its life and that life's processes, and is aware of the implications of diverse philosophies. The pessimists of the past did not recognize themselves as such; on the contrary, they often esteemed themselves as the necessary paths to all success and fruition. But the modern pessimist has his eyes open; he knows what his doctrine intends and he fully accepts it in all its blankness and negation. To him the world is all wrong

and extinction is the only sure and logical goal of the misadventure.

The two great modern upholders of the pessimistic doctrine are of course Schopenhauer and Von Hartmann.

The system of Schopenhauer has a curious break in the middle, and it is to this break that his pessimistic tendencies owe their strength and their cogency. According to him, the substance of this world is Will, but the doctrine of a Universal Will, an all-creating and all-preserving activity, allies itself very badly with the notion that wills are to find their consummation in a loss of all activity, in permanent extinction. Schopenhauer therefore confines his demonstration of the futility of human endeavor and the insufficiency of human enjoyment to the sphere of the intelligence. The latter emerges by some not particularly well-defined method from the fundamental will, and has to the latter a merely extrinsic relation. In its highest development it is contradictory to the brute will from which it arose, and must so strongly determine its own abolition that the irrational primal force can never again thrust it into light and misery. The fundamental will, therefore, is a wholly unintelligent and unconscious one, and we are face to face with the strange contradiction that intelligence demonstrates the existence of an unintelligence which is yet greater than itself. If the world be thus considered as cut in two in the middle, it is really wholly arbitrary and temperamental on which horn of the dilemma we are willing to be impaled. Schopenhauer chooses the will — unintelligent, irrational will; the choice is a peculiar one for him, as he was in no sense a man of action, and shrank with a nervous dread from association with his fellows. He could not even get on with his own

mother, a woman of distinction, who had no profound sympathy with his views. We are again confronted with the same sort of first principle: an unintelligent will does not differ very widely from a Nirvana, destitute of all characteristics, or a superlucent darkness, which is more than light because there is no chance of seeing anything in it.

Von Hartmann adopts the whole doctrine frankly and in set terms. In him really the pessimistic dogma, so to speak, comes to the fullest consciousness, and he may be said to be its chief doctor and upholder. The others were either unconscious or more or less unclear; he shrinks at nothing, and presents his system with unsparing force and freedom from obscurity. He was a very different man from Schopenhauer; he had been of all things a soldier, had mixed in great performances, was a genial man of family, and, in spite of his views, had children on whom rolled the burden of the misery which is the lot of every man who cometh into the world. The deity whom he worshiped is the Unconscious, and of course he had much the same difficulty in expressing what he meant thereby as his predecessors. The Unconscious is some mysterious clairvoyant unity of Will and Reason or Idea; a colossal shadowy soul, whose blind intelligence strikes with more or less accuracy through the reach of æons at its own existence. How the Conscious arises out of it is a problem with which he deals very unsuccessfully, and why he continues to live is a question which he has elaborately tried to answer. Principally because one death more or less would be of small avail, the whole race must learn how much better it is not to be than to be, and then pass over into that bliss which is again wholly past description because all description implies a conscious and well-defined exercise of intelligence.

Von Hartmann has written a most interesting book on the *Religion of the Future,* in which all religions will finally merge, and whose substance is the renunciation of all life in the wholly blank and vague and limitless immensity, which knows nothing of itself and which is so aberrant from its fundamental condition as to produce, contrary to its inherent nature, conscious beings who must suffer and wail and agonize as long as they are conscious. Schopenhauer called himself a Buddhist; Von Hartmann knows that he is beyond them all; the ecstasy of saint and priest and guide all blend in him; the ecstasy of a supreme sacrifice of all humanity and himself so that the Great Unconscious may be spared the misery of having conscious children.

What does it all signify? It will hardly do to sweep so vast and portentous a thought movement into the abyss with the simple statement that it is entirely a vagary of the human consciousness, and regard it purely as one of the many ways in which the erring mind of man deceives itself. It is far too large and organic for that; it appears rather to belong to thought itself, and, to understand thought itself, one will have to give due place to this one of its aspects.

The opposite and optimistic thought has like it gone through its various phases, and shows itself side by side with its gloomy congener. It has not been the object of this paper to attempt the placing of the optimistic deduction side by side with the pessimistic one, except in drawing such conclusions as the writer can from them both.

The strength of the conclusion that whatever is, is right, exceeds unquestionably the one that whatever is, is wrong, and the optimist can always make the rejoinder that the most thorough-going pessimist assumes as good, nay best,

one thing: namely, universal extinction. The pessimist thus logically cuts the very ground from under his own feet, and his ultimate point of view vanishes into the one which is its own opposite.

Yet the good appears to be strangely put to very severe straits in working out its results, and often is so hard pressed that defeat seems to stare it in the face, and the most confirmed optimist grows somewhat pallid at the prospect. Shall it be always thus — the wrong so frequently in power, and the right so frequently oppressed and debarred from its just and noble fruitions —

> Right forever on the scaffold,
> Wrong forever on the throne?

The demonstration that the substance of the world is infinite goodness has been made again and again with a fervor and a cogency that cannot be gainsaid. The substance of things must be conscious, for if it were unconscious it would be limited by the conscious, and could not therefore be the infinite substance. The Orient had, as was pointed out, leaned to the opinion that the Master of the world is unconscious; the Occident, Europe and America, has based its whole life and history upon the opposite view. As W. T. Harris said:

"On this rock (that God is Supreme Reason) is built the final definition by which Europe and the Western World distinguished itself from the other world, the world of the Orient. God, the Supreme Being, is not a formless essence — an empty entity — transcendent to all thought and to all reflection, because such a Supreme Being has no existence or outward manifestation. But the true God is infinite form

(infinite because self-related). He is Divine Reason, and Reason is self-activity that perpetually reveals itself in distinctions and categories, in creation and in human cognition. Man has the divine destiny to partake in the divine life — being endowed with Reason as the light of all his seeing — and is able by diligent application to purify his thinking and become familiar with those eternal thoughts of the Creator in and for themselves."

That is the optimistic conclusion; but over against it stands the pessimistic conclusion, aggressive, vigorous, shadowy. Can we hold them both and attempt to unify them? Perhaps such is the final word, and, with the full recognition of evil in all its darkness and windings and subtle penetrativeness, we may discover that the solvent word is Victory, the conquest of the right over the wrong, the mastery of the dark by the light, the overpowering of the base by the noble.

If one asks further why any such conflict should be, it may be answered — with what validity the reader must decide — that completeness would not be complete save as it included and dominated all incompleteness, that goodness would not be goodness save as it overmastered evil. The pessimistic thinkers virtually concede this in placing at the head of their systems the blank nothingness to which they address self-contradictory hymns of praise and thanksgiving. Without the conflict and the victory, goodness would indeed be only a self-contained and transcendental sameness, which could not know itself, much less know another. Whatever is, is right, and whatever is, is wrong, but the concrete reality is infinite self-realization, infinite potency, infinite triumph.

I must, however, hereby make my peace with the saints and the mystics, who after all do not belong with the pessi-

mistic conclave, and yet they approach dangerously near those doctrines by making their fundamental entity superior to thought and reason. Yet one sees that they do not quite mean what they say, and pour out their ardors before that Reality which, being Goodness itself, resides on high, triumphant and glorified over evil, which becomes its servant and coadjutor.

IS SCIENCE FINAL?

WE suppose that every one makes the effort to adjust himself in such a way to the prevalent thought of his period as to be reasonably comfortable and at home in it. To be in permanent antagonism with one's neighbor, or, more forcibly, to have a veritable quarrel on hand between our intellectual lungs and the atmosphere which these are obliged to breathe, is a position neither tenable nor creditable. Fortunately, there are usually two camps, more or less actively hostile, each one of which arrogates to itself the dominant influence of the age, and in either one of which we can be soothed to more or less adequate acceptance of life under the conditions in which it ordinarily presents itself. Every now and then, however, we find ourselves rather rudely awakened from the peacefulness into which we had fallen and the trouble begins anew. The suspicion is at last aroused that both contestants are more or less in the wrong, and that a composition of differences is possible. This article will not attempt such a composition, but will rather try to subject some positions widely accepted to a scrutiny for which they constantly call, but which nevertheless they seem very loth to make.

We recognize the tendency of thought to run to extremes; it has all the courage that anything possesses, and it is not satisfied until it has reached the last conclusions which its premises either justify, or do not justify; for apparently a start fairly made in the direction of the illogical bounds to-

ward the limit with as much alacrity as if the last clouds of doubt had vanished and the sun of truth had fairly arisen.

Thought swings between opposites like a pendulum between the extremes of the arc which it describes. During the earlier years of the nineteenth century the great idealistic movement in Germany, reflected in this country in the writings of the so-called transcendentalists, penetrated all effort, literary, scientific, philosophic. Schelling attempted an idealistic construction of Nature, and we can read echoes of it in Emerson's poems and Thoreau's essays. Carlyle was set on fire by the moral enthusiam of Fichte and measured modern life by a standard which, in his inflexible application, life could but very unsatisfactorily bear.

Now all that has been changed. The idealist remains and utters his message at intervals, but he is heard with some impatience. He appears to belong to a preceding generation and the new comers who hold the territory have for him that sort of half-humorous consideration which we grant to one who has done well within his opportunity, but who is now hopelessly behind the age.

The scientist has taken possession and he tries to make it very clear that his occupancy is permanent. He is constantly widening his scope, and endeavoring more and more to bring into his domain subjects over which it would seem that he has little reason to claim jurisdiction. He is rapidly obliterating the old landmarks and ignoring distinctions which one had supposed especially in need of explanation. The feud between mind and matter is again settled, and definitely in favor of matter. What the innumerable caravan of fresh discoveries may eventually turn out to be no one can predict, but thus far intellectually they have only succeeded in in-

creasing the number of those who wrap their cloaks around them and join the multitudinous and admirable army of the dead. The fact, however, remains: the methods of the scientist are dominant; things imponderable and unmeasurable are subjected to the scales and the yard-stick; and many an airy nothing is finding itself in a local habitation, and with a name of which it never even most remotely dreamed.

The theologian has been accused, rightfully or wrongfully, of a good deal of confidence in his own view of the world, and a plentiful lack of consideration for the opinions of others. He has been credited with much arrogance in his assumption of exclusive admission into the counsels of the Infinite, and a wholesome abhorrence of any unwarranted intrusion upon his domains. We have all heard of the furor or rancor *theologicus,* and perhaps have not been without some practical experiences of its extent and vigor. The scientist has complained bitterly of any attempt to infringe on his freedom of investigation, and has had some rather tremendous things to say about the indispensable liberty of genuine research, and the need of approaching a subject without vitiating prejudgements. The demand for liberty, however, ought strictly to be a universal one; if a man asks for liberty for himself, he should be willing to grant the same immunity from needless restrictions to all other men. This the emancipated scientist has not always been willing to do, and he has developed a very formidable furor or rancor *scientificus* on his own account. Throughout the scientific writings, there is a pervasive but urbane smile, as it were, at the unfortunate beings who are unwilling to believe that the last word has been said by the very shallowest school of English or Continental empiricists.

The scientist demands that one shall not only accept his conclusions, but accept them also in the way in which he accepts them. One must take him all in all, or not at all. Thus with his favorite device of evolution. He has only recently discovered that some doctrine of evolution is at least as old as the Greeks, and for aught he can tell to the contrary, may have been the method employed by our famous progenitor in the naming of earth's multifarious creatures as they passed before him. It has been taken for granted that everything has been evolved — the marks of growth and transition are impressed upon the world and all worlds — that the nebulæ scattered across the infinite blackness, when properly inspected, will show themselves in various stages of progress and decay — that all history will present itself, when the requisite tests are applied, as starting from nowhere and going nowhither.

The great god, Chance, presided at the beginning, has controled the varying stages of the movement, and will properly assist at the obsequies. The subtle mathematical calculations as to what the probabilities are of a number of disrelated atoms combined into orderly and persistent groups have been many and curious.

The solution has remained somewhat obscure, and has found at certain points some really surprising difficulties, such as the transformation of the mechanical into the vital, or the conversion of a number of nervous thrills into a fully-equipped and self-recognizing consciousness.

However, things must present some elements of stability; explanation would find itself in a curious predicament if the results of to-day only sufficed for their complete overthrow to-morrow. Evolution as an adequate and satisfactory ac-

count of the phenomena with which it deals, cannot in itself be subject to a constant evolution, for such a hypothesis would render it wholly useless, either as an instrument of investigation or a statement of conclusion. We shall have to be able to plant our feet firmly somewhere at last if we expect really to know anything, or to act intelligently from such knowledge. In other words, the law of progress must be a permanent one, or the achievements of to-day will be ruthlessly swept away overnight. Evolution itself, therefore, is based upon a deeper and larger reality, and this deeper and larger reality cannot be thought as a growth or as something changeable. It has always been, and it will always be. It can in no sense be said to have been evolved; we are confronted with a double series of facts, with one that is stable, actual, permanent, and with another that is fluctuating, developing, growing. Evolution, therefore, is strictly based upon that which is not evolved at all; it cannot be regarded as a universal statement of what is in the world; it is only a small fraction, a part of a greater whole, which encircles it, which overrules it, which gives it such efficacy and such place as it has.

The scientific method has several favorite devices for the surmounting of difficulties. One of these is to throw the fact to be explained into a remote antiquity whither the oldest memory of man has small access, and to allow for the passage of immense periods of time for the bringing about of results. It is indeed remarkable to discover how much is known about the habits and manner of life of the prehistoric man, whose existence is not always as certain as the things he assuredly did. Should it even be proved that a certain phase of development had no actual foundation, it can always be slipped into the series as a link which the logic of the situa-

tion requires. That affairs must have transpired in the dim hoary distance which were wholly different from the ones which we see proceeding under our eyes is taken for granted, and astonishing transformations are readily admissible in the haze of the void and abysm of time. The ease, too, with which important elements of the problem can be lost sight of in the weltering waste of years, the simplifying of matters otherwise troublesome, deserves to be taken into account and duly considered.

Another device of the scientific method is the minimizing of differences by regarding them as made up of fine and insensible gradations. The inorganic shades off by exquisite degrees into the organic, and the unconscious passes by very subtle steps into the conscious. The supposition seems to be that if a distinction is reduced to a scarcely appreciable quantity, it need no longer be seriously considered and indeed may be wholly dropped out as not influential. In such ways it is easy enough to demonstrate that everything is mechanical, and that matter, so-called, contains the promise and potency of the highest possible to all thought. When we, however, begin to ask ourselves what matter is, we meet with a dual process. From one aspect it appears as the ultimate abstraction, emptied of all qualities and hardly susceptible of definition. It can as little be called inorganic as organic, for the one is as dependent upon it for subsistence as the other. It cannot be called a simple or a compound, for these are thinkable only in relation to one another. We may take the desperate Spencerian leap in the dark, and call it a form of the Unknowable, but it cannot be a form at all, and we are then further obliged to ask ourselves what is the Unknowable. This last is assuredly the strangest contradiction in terms that ever the

mind of man puzzled itself withal. To call it the Unknowable, to find in it the source of anything or the explanation of anything, is to bring it out of its worse than Cimmerian gloom and make it deny its own nature. It is the sheerest superfluity in any system of thought, for it adds nothing, helps nothing, in fact is the pure nothingness itself. To write marvelous hymns of praise in prose or rhyme about the Unknowable is to indulge in a mysticism beside which the rhapsodies of the Oriental metaphysicians are as clear as any novel of Mr. Howells, or as racy as Mr. Kipling's adventures in the depths of the Asiatic jungle. It is thus, indeed, that science in its unconsciousness of the thought processes which dominate it becomes wholly alien to itself, and proceeds along a route for which it has always expressed the utmost abhorrence.

In the other aspect of matter we reverse the process of abstraction, and by adding to it characteristic after characteristic, make it indeed the potency out of which may come all manner of efflorescence. We may go so far as to call it " mind-stuff," and give to every particle a sort of rudimentary consciousness, which, thrown into suitable conditions, may develop into a foolish jellyfish, or rise to the dignity of creating Victor Hugo's *Legend of the Ages*. It may be a question, however, whether the term, " matter," is any longer applicable to a reality which contains attributes, and has in it every property of everything ready to be produced whenever it is called upon. It has become the scientist's magical purse, always full to the brim with the coins of all lands, and never lacking in the small change which the special occasion requires. One interesting fact, however, to be observed here, is the kind of oscillating thinking in which there is so free an

indulgence. At first we have a continuous abstraction which leaves us in the presence of the Unknowable, and then we have a concreting which terminates where the scientist is a little loth to go. The atomic theory affords no secure halting place; attempts to define the atom present us anew with the difficulties enumerated above. The atom is either stripped of all attributes, and then one atom is wholly indistinguishable from another, and the sum of these zeros can hardly be said to make up a calculable quantity, or the atom becomes a monad with an undeveloped mind, and the whole resurgence is taken for granted in the original terms. To be sure, the atomic theory is said to be only a working hypothesis, so-called, apparently, because it can be made to work both ways with equal facility. In the seclusion of the laboratory, and face to face with the expert in the same field, the hypothesis may be admitted as only a convenient form of statement of certain appearances and coincidences and regularities, which have been always observed to take place under given circumstances; but in the heat of popular discussion, and before minds ready to accept results without the knowledge for their independent exploration, the hypothesis rapidly assumes the form and authority of established truth, and the pageant of the world emerging out of and passing into the Unknowable or the Nought makes assuredly an imposing spectacle.

The rise of differences and the transitions from plane to plane of experimental knowledge urgently demand explanation. The passage from the inorganic to the organic, from the organic to the conscious, from the conscious to the spiritual, are among the vexed questions with which science busies itself. The more conservative scientists admit that some of these questions are not solvable by their methods, and indeed

are not within the domain of science; inasmuch, however, as these are inclined to think that attempts to answer them are bound to fail, and inasmuch as others present answers which leave out of sight the most important elements, one is left in a dilemma, on either horn of which impalement is peculiarly excruciating. We are obliged to admit on the one hand that we are begirt by a perfect wilderness of contradictions, which becomes more thorny and disastrous the deeper we penetrate it; the opening chapters of Spencer's *First Principles* show us into what a maze of difficulties we rush, unless we are willing to accept his view of the relativity of all knowledge; the first parts of Lotze's *Microcosmus* plunge us into a similar jungle of impassable metaphysical conceptions. It may be supposed that the very thought which so magnificently shows up the two sides of the antithesis spans them both, and therefore is itself their unity and solution. Failing to see this, we are forced to accept the mechanical theory of the world with all its consequences, and in doing so to obliterate the very things with which we began, and of which we attempted to give a satisfactory account. When we accept, moreover, the scientific answer, we do not find the peace and comfort which we anticipated. Instead of a delicious harmony, we discover the usual discord, not resolved into the cognate concord. The development theory, whose triumph some years ago we voiced with a fervor that was resonant as a Pindaric ode, seems to-day less assured of itself, and certainly is undergoing transformations which its designers did not expect. It appears that other factors must be introduced beside the transition of the homogeneous into the heterogeneous, or the struggle for the survival of the fittest, or the love affairs of the multitudinous creatures, or

the inheritance of derived peculiarities, or the successful hiding from the assaults of enemies, or the affection for bright or somber colorings. Professor Drummond introduced the altruistic factor into the whole selfish carnival, and in so doing opened the door into an entire new world of possibilities and likelihoods. The last word in evolution has not been said by any means, and Darwinism and the others are on the eve of a metamorphosis more radical than any that they were called into being to explain.

When one enters higher spheres the same tendency to deprive the phenomena to be explained of their salient peculiarities appears even more strongly. What mind is in the usual development theory, would be a rather difficult thing to say, but in many of these solutions the essence of mind is first despoiled of what especially constitutes its mind, and the reduction to merely mechanical factors becomes very easy. It is true that the characteristics thus dropped out are afterwards reintroduced and discussed, but there is a singular unconsciousness that such reintroduction has in a large measure vitiated the theory to be defended. Herbert Spencer identifies mind with motion, and on account of that considers himself more an idealist than Hegel or Plato, because these last, he thinks, presuppose some sort of refined material out of which minds are made, different wholly from matter, so-called. His reduction of both matter and motion into forms of the Unknowable contains so many contradictions that it would fill the rest of this article to elucidate even a part of them. But it must be admitted that if mind be motion, it is certainly a very different sort of motion from the kind about which we ordinarily talk. Fichte showed that mind necessarily involved two series, the one

of simple apprehension, and the other of recognition of the apprehensible series, and the fact to be explained, therefore, is the presence of both series and their relation to each other. It was Aristotle who showed that the concrete can never be explained by the abstract, and the attempt to reduce all mind to the merely sensuous involves at every step the begging of the whole question, for the new and more concrete factors are constantly slipped in surreptitiously and without warrant. So with the notion of mind and matter being two aspects of the same substance. Of course, the whole point is to know the substance which thus presents itself in two contradictory aspects; an unextended aspect, consciousness, and an extended one, body. Simply to say that these are two aspects of one substance is merely to reproduce the original question in a new form of words, and to make that new form more hopelessly tangled than the old. For how to unite the extended and the unextended in the same thing, — for that is precisely what is meant, — remains yet an affair not very clear; indeed, that the same thing should be at the same time and in the same sense both extended and unextended, is one of those conceptions which only a ghostly terror of the genuinely metaphysical, belonging to some forms of modern speculation, could have produced.

When we enter the field of scientific ethics, we meet with the same difficulties over again. The ethical ideal is at once made to conform to the Procrustean bed of the sensuous hypothesis. The affirmation is constantly made that nothing can be in the mind except what it has received from without; indeed, the very constitution of the mind itself appears to be a gift from the environment. There has always been considerable difficulty in the attempt to state how the evolutionary

process unfolds itself into an internality which reacts upon the evolutionary process itself as external to it, for all mind does precisely this. Passing over the point with the ease which usually characterizes the abstract development theory, we can readily see that the reactions of mind upon its source, the environment, will take the form of conduct or morals. The mind, however, can form no ideas of conduct or its own motion; ideals of conduct are only abstractions from the effects brought about in it by the world around it. Under these conditions, what will be the form which conduct must assume? In the first place, there ought to be harmony between the mind and its environment. This is practically the happiness conception. When we and the world around us are at one, we shall receive the maximum amount of pleasure, and pleasure, of course, is something in itself desirable. This last is to be taken for granted without further demonstration. There have been martyrdoms all down the course of history, but they may, on the whole, be safely left out of the count. Pleasure, however, is pretty sure to be individual; the relation of one person to the environment differs materially from that of every other one; so that the search for pleasure must mean the search for one's own good. At least that is an inevitable aspect of it. In the second place, however, pleasures conflict, and if this conflict be allowed to go too far, the pleasure of everyone will be destroyed, and the potent environment will have been wholly thwarted in its philanthropic intentions. We shall be obliged, therefore, to introduce a reverse tendency; we shall be obliged to find in the environment a potency compelling us to be good to others, so far as it does not conflict with the good of ourselves, or we shall be permitted to do only those things which are not

hurtful to other men. The reconciliation of these opposite movements presents a great many difficulties, and the environment is put to sad straits to go both ways at once. The solution seems to be that the environment seeks the good of all; this good can, in the nature of the case, only be a compromise; and when the environment has brought to pass the compromise, first, and then the acquiescence of everyone in the compromise, the moral status of the world may be considered complete, and the amount of happiness will be the greatest possible. One may ask oneself whether the result be worth the effort, whether the sacrifice one is obliged to make for the end held out is not greater than the latter deserves, whether anything short of the whole of goodness and the whole of realization is worthy the search and attainment of the simplest soul that ever found in itself a hope and longing that transcended any and every environment, that was more than all the worlds and all the heavens, that so exceeded all externality that it could never have sprung from it, and that was a completion which, the more it was shared with others, the more it enlarged and deepened and ennobled.

The considerations so imperfectly given above lead to several conclusions. They are not to be interpreted into hostility to either science or the evolution theory in themselves. They indicate, however, that a full and satisfactory account of the true and genuine methods of science, and the limits within which these methods are adequate and valid, is a desideratum. Science has altogether been proceeding without a sufficient reflection upon itself, its nature, and the range of its results. With an adequate understanding of its true field and the character of the methods which should govern its procedure, science will rest satisfied with the results

legitimately hers, and cease arrogating to herself the ownership of the entire territory. She will also recognize the true significance of the development theory, accept the presence of factors which she has been inclined to deny, and discover that evolution is but half the truth of which involution is the other half. She will also be ready to admit that, because her methods everywhere strike against evident boundaries, that is no reason for saying that a passage beyond those boundaries is wholly impossible to intelligence, and beyond the results which she achieves there is only that dreary and barren "no-territory" which so many are so unreasonably fond of under the misnomer of the Unknowable.

The achievements of science are among the things that most deserve our gratitude; the evolution theory must be understood and its full import allowed for; but the transcendent heritage left by the great thinkers of the past are not therefore ruthlessly to be cast aside, and the intelligence narrowed down to what is after all only one field of its exercise, and that by no means its most important or emancipating one.

Every science has at its center a principle or group of principles which give it unity, and which enable it to deal with the infinite particulars of its subject matter. These principles also, and the organization of the science effected by them, constitute the basis of the differentiation of one science from another, and the reason for the uniting of all sciences in a consistent whole of knowledge. These principles cannot themselves be derived from any simple combination or manipulation of the data of the science itself, nor can the ordinary methods by which the science reaches its results be made applicable to them. The attempt to do this very thing

results in discovering insoluble contradictions everywhere. It is in just this way that we are brought to the unsatisfactory conclusion that the mind of man can go only a very little distance, and then it knocks its metaphysical head against an impassable stone wall, and irrationally determines that everything depends on some inexplicable mystery on the other side. If, again, these fundamental principles are said to be derived by abstraction from the given facts, we find ourselves in the presence of fixed and sterile conceptions, with which the more we deal the more we are obliged to confess their impotence and uselessness. It was of such abstractions that Bacon said that their investigation remains forever without issue.

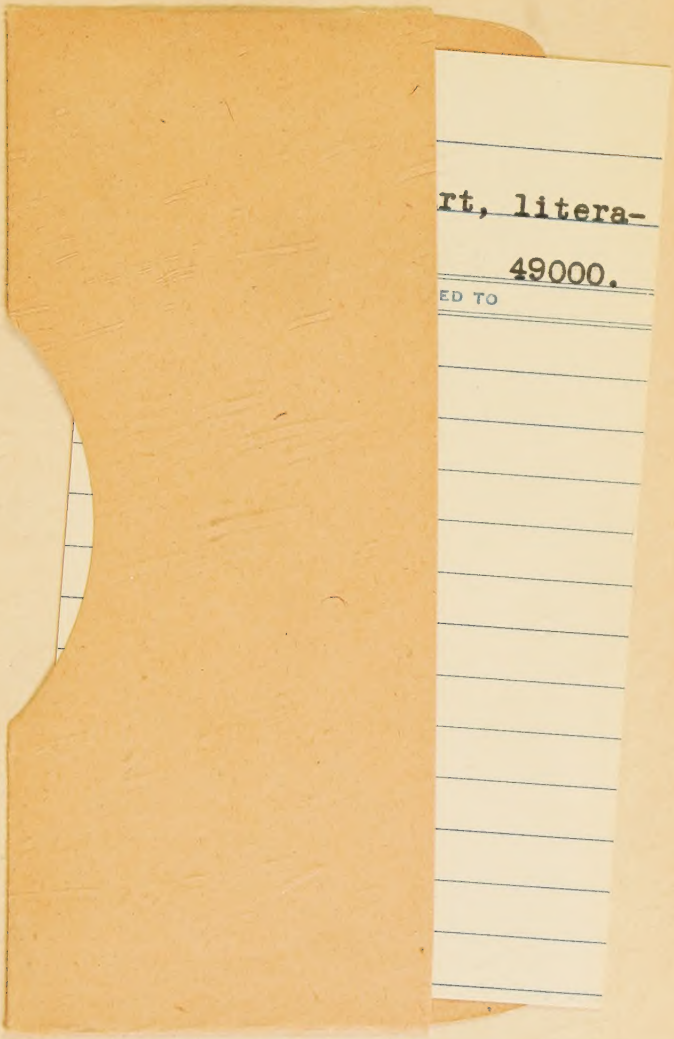
We shall be obliged to admit that there must be another sphere into which mind can enter, where the apparent contradictions are solved. That such a sphere exists, in spite of the scientific denials, all the great thinkers and poets and saints of all ages and climes unite in affirming. The ascent into this higher realm will clear up the difficulties which have been besieging us, and will give to science itself a vigor and a consistency which it never had before. We shall discover that a phenomenon is strictly correlated with a noumenon and that an object of knowledge cannot be without a corresponding subject, and that no phase of the object can be without its counterpart in the active and embracing unity of such subject. This higher realm is the fountain of all our seeing, the lawgiver in the realm of the Knowable; we have overleaned the barrier, indeed taken up that very barrier into our synthesis, and find ourselves in the presence of the ever-unfolding revelation, each of whose mysteries opens its doors at our approach, admitting us into endless halls beyond.

Science, now assured of itself and its methods, can proceed to grander and larger results, and will indeed become consciously and fully, as Bacon says, the handmaid of the progress of humanity. Science will no longer throw itself into antagonism with the deepest needs of the human spirit, but become reverent and subordinate to the profounder revelations of the Infinite Reason. If such results cannot be, it were better that our whole world should vanish at once and leave not a vestige behind. As for me, if such conclusions must be taken from me, I should wish to go back to some earlier stage of history, when the world was young and did not trouble itself much with thought of any kind; indeed with the poet Wordsworth, I should exclaim:

> Great God, I'd rather be
> A pagan suckled on a creed outworn,
> So might I, standing on this pleasant lea,
> Have glimpses that would make me less forlorn;
> Have sight of Proteus rising from the sea,
> And hear old Triton blow his wreathed horn.

Date Due

L. B. Cat. No. 1137


rt, litera-
49000.
ED TO